

THE LIVING AGE.

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THE ENGLISH GRAVES.

The rains of yesterday are flown,
And light is on the farthest hills.
The homeliest rough grass by the
stone

With radiance thrills;

And the wet bank above the ditch,
Trailing its thorny bramble, shows
Soft apparitions, clustered rich,
Of the pure primrose.

The shining stillness breathes, vibrates
From simple earth to lonely sky,
A hinted wonder that awaits
The heart's reply.

O lovely life! the chaffinch sings
High on the hazel, near and clear.
Sharp to the heart's blood sweetness
springs
In the morning here.

But my heart goes with the young
cloud

That voyages the April light
Southward, across the beaches loud
And cliffs of white

To fields of France, far fields that
spread

Beyond the tumbling of the waves,
And touches as with shadowy tread
The English graves.

There too is Earth that never weeps,
The unrepining Earth, that holds
The secret of a thousand sleeps
And there unfolds

Flowers of sweet ignorance on the
slope

Where strong arms dropped and
blood choked breath,
Earth that forgets all things but hope
And smiles on death . . .

They poured their spirits out in pride,
They throbbled away the price of
years;

Now that dear ground is glorified
With dreams, with tears.

A flower there is sown, to bud
And bloom beyond our loss and
smart.

Noble France, at its root is blood
From England's heart.

Laurence Binyon.

The Spectator.

DREAMS.

O the track that dips to the river
through a mass of purple bloom,
And winds away to the hill-tops, where
the great crags dimly loom!
I was there again in a dream just now,
by the low-walled mountain fold,
When the sun was striking the West-
ern hills with a sword of burn-
ing gold.

O the low thatch-house on the gareys!
with the yellow gorse around,
And the little spring by the gable mak-
ing music in the ground;
I went through the door as I used to
do—but the hearth was black
and bare,
And the hush of cold desolation lay
like a mantle everywhere.

O the curraghs out to the Westward!
with their smell of rain-wet turf,
And the noise of the little rivers run-
ning down to meet the surf. . . .
I was only there in a dream, I know,
but I shall not soon forget—
For I heard the call of my native land,
and my heart is throbbing yet!
Mona Douglas.

The Bookman.

ALL'S WELL!

Watchman, watchman, what of the
night,
What of the night to tell?
There are widows weeping, and babes
affright,
And a ceaseless burial bell.
But the hand that holds the gun
Still shakes not;
And the line drops one by one,
Yet breaks not.
Of the blood so nobly poured
There shall surely be reward.
In the name of the Lord,
All's Well!

F. W. Bourdillon.

THE TEMPER OF THE PEOPLE.

I have before me the leading article of an American paper of a month ago. It is one of the least sensational of the best known Eastern journals. Its attitude for the past year has been favorable to this country. It learns what is going on here from the English newspapers, or a section of them; and from these it estimates the mettle and temper of the British people. It calls its estimate "The Blindness of the English." It announces that scientists and pseudo-scientists have expatiated upon the "falling physical and moral stamina of the island people, and have foretold collapse of the world Empire in the day of supreme trial." It declares that this gloomy theory seemed to be disproved during the early days of the war. "The demonstration of Governmental efficiency was not more remarkable than the evidences of national sanity, sobriety, and determination." To-day it finds—with profound regret—that this was but the passing galvanic spasm of a perishing people; like some chord of the harp of Tara that "indignant breaks" to show that still she lives. "The unity of half a year ago had disappeared, and on all sides there were carping criticism and confusing controversy and recrimination. Among the troops in the field there were splendid bravery and uncomplaining sacrifices, while thoughtful Britons at home were appalled by the slackness, inefficiency, and selfishness of the nation at large." "The people pursue their businesses and pleasures," is the diagnosis, "in careless self-confidence, and exhibit a passionate determination that not even the most menacing situation in the annals of the Empire shall be permitted to curtail their comforts or their indulgences." It showers its contempt on those at

the top as well as on those at the bottom of the social scale. "Tory politicians scheme to discredit the party in power and furnish the German Press with columns of news about partisan dissensions. Business-men and financiers devote themselves to money-hunting. Labor is more insistent upon its demands than in times of peace. So inveterate is the spirit of selfishness that a proposal to stop the sale of intoxicants during the war because of their demoralizing effects, threatens to overturn the Government."

The British reader may shrug his shoulders and even be a little amused at this amazing estimate of Britain to-day. But he should realize also that this picture is the one which a section of the Press, uncensored in opinion, has spread throughout all lands of the world—amongst our Allies, the countries of the enemy, and, most tragically and harmfully, to those neutrals, which, on the borderland of this gigantic struggle, have been trying to estimate for nearly a year whether themselves embarking upon it will prove the ruin or the triumph of their own national ideals. "I will not now dwell," writes a correspondent in California, "for it must be a dreadful anxiety to you, upon the dismay among England's friends at the revelations which are now appearing in the Press regarding the Cabinet changes, and the consequent discredit as to the conduct of the war. This, coupled with the threatened strikes, makes many doubt the fibre of the British nation, and its ability to rapidly bring the war to a close, as was hoped when the new armies were ready for the front." Germany finds cause for comfort in this fulfilment of a prophecy which before the war was so generally accepted, of the collapse and decay of a

nation which had refused to Prussianize itself by militarism and the docile obedience of the citizen to the military state. "No soldier," writes, in a lyrical outburst, the *Hamburger Nachrichten*, "no general, no U-boat goes to his sphere of action accompanied by warmer wishes than the Zeppelin that sails for London—for London, where the new Ministry is cudgelling its brains to bring false flags, 'protective Americans,' submarines, compulsory service, shortage of munitions and Zeppelins, into harmony with the spirit of the island people." And from such a country as Sweden—which, above all, ought to know the truth concerning the temper of our people in this matter—comes a column of extracts in the *Stockholm Dagblad*, from a series of articles in the *Evening News* "by the celebrated English author, William Watson"; praising German organization, efficiency, and enthusiasm, as contrasted with England's indifference. "Can we show," he is quoted as asking, "any counterpart to this enthusiasm? To that there is only one true and reliable answer. We cannot."

Here, then, is the result of the "Liberty of Prophesying" as unscrupulously used by a portion of the Press for the pushing forward of some particular desired item of propaganda—military conscription, or the regimentation of labor, or perhaps just some opinion, as of a Colonial Bishop who pictures the soldiers in the trenches demanding a Coalition Government, or of the head master of a great public school who attributes the "prevailing apathy" of the lower classes in this war to the fact that they have not received that training in character which the public schools alone can give. It is inevitable that this "liberty" shall continue, that alone amongst the combatants our newspapers shall come out without matter "blackened out" or with white empty

spaces; and that every citizen whose mind is temporarily unbalanced by the war shall still be enabled to rush into correspondence concerning spies, the iniquity of the working classes, or the perilous dangers of invasion. Without such freedom a criticism might perish which is useful and just. But it is as well that these critics who write either to push a policy, to run a "sensational," or who are merely animated by the inevitable itch for expression, should realize the incalculable injury which they are doing to their country in this crisis. They have created to-day an encouragement of its enemies, an amazement and contempt amongst neutrals and non-combatants; they have even excited the disquietude of friends. And they have innocently or deliberately chosen to propagate a falsehood. They have created a fog and miasma behind which foreign observers find a difficulty in apprehending the spirit and temper of our people.

Let us consider first the armies.

The advocates of conscription are honest and patriotic persons. They have been led astray from ignorance of England. Their accepted formula before the war was that Britain could never raise more than half a million men for service overseas. In the first week of the war the Prime Minister boldly appealed for that number of volunteers. I can remember the shock of wonder last August with which that appeal was at first received. It was a request for twice the number of volunteers who fought in South Africa. It was a request made at a moment when the idea that we should send any troops at all to the Continent came as a surprise to the general public. But there was no doubt as to the response. In a day began that gigantic flood of those who were willing to fight for England which sometimes has increased in volume and sometimes diminished, but has never ceased to flow strong

and clear. In a week the flower of British manhood was literally fighting its way into the recruiting stations. They came in at the rate of twenty thousand or thirty thousand a day. They broke down all conceivable preparations which could be made for their reception or equipment. They were elastic about age limits. They eluded medical inspection. The whole manhood of the country seemed determined to go to the war overseas. Whole industries, and those of vital importance, were denuded of their best workers. The half-million doubled, and then doubled again. The most wonderful Army the world has ever seen came into being; some three millions of men, all in the prime of manhood, all having chosen to serve, not for the protection of their own homes, but in foreign lands, a cause which they believed to be just. Such a creation has proved as great a surprise to the friends of voluntary service, whose hopes have thus been triumphantly vindicated, as to the advocates of conscription, who see their theories shattered and destroyed. It has been calculated, indeed, that the percentage of available men enlisted already exceeds the percentage of the Northern Armies in America, enrolled during a struggle of four years, in which the North was fighting alone and the enemy actually invading its own territory.

It is an Army which is educated and intelligent as no British Army has been before. It has made up its own mind on the matter. It has not been recruited by drink, the Press Gang, or inflammatory influences of military display. Its numbers increase in defeat rather than in victory. It responds to the appeal of sacrifice rather than to that of any ease or comfort. Every revelation of the brutality and horror of war—atrocities committed on the wounded, the torture of high explosive shells or poisonous gases—im-

mediately produces an increased number of recruits. No appeal for any special class of recruit with particular knowledge or training has failed to excite that class to respond. It is a Volunteer Army drawn from every section of the community. The Public Schools and Universities have given of their best. So have the Highland Crofts, where in whole parishes scarcely a man of military age remains behind. So have the miners, pouring up from underground, nearly a quarter of a million of them, from Northumberland to the Rhondda. So have Lancashire, and the Clyde workers which recruit battalion after battalion, and the London clerk who cannot be kept back even for the necessary work of Government business; and the East End laborer, whom the country has not given very much to fight for, and who is denounced by bellicose Archdeacons for not caring much whether he is ruled by England or by Germany.

It has grown to these enormous dimensions without ostentation or display. There has been no "flagwagging" and no "Mafficking." It has grown despite the querulous complaints of newspapers and publicists who see their pet panacea overwhelmed in this wave of voluntary offering of sacrifice and service. Its members vanish quietly from field and factory, with no tumult of weeping or rejoicing. They pass into the vast camp of rural England. After a time, with the same quietness, they ship over the sea to France and Flanders. Only the return of the wounded, also without display, shows that they have gone; or little groups of women and children in black on village green or in mean square. In all England there is scarcely a family without anxiety or a street without a loss.

There are those who are offended at the voluntary nature of this uprising. They denounce the need

for persuasion, as "conscription by cajolery." They prefer State discipline to self-discipline, rigorous rule to the free offering of free men. They deplore the lack of symmetry and exactitude—they term these "organization"—which the calling up of "classes" of a conscripted nation alone can give. They declare that we may have enough men, but not the right men: that we have too many of a trade, or too many married men, or too many of a certain stamp or age. They advocate the amazing expedient of compulsion, not to increase the numbers, but to change the texture, of our Army of Volunteers. They would compulsorily retire from an Army whose function is fighting those who want to fight, and compulsorily replace them by those who don't want to fight. Not by such methods are great victories won.

There are others who are offended at the methods of recruiting the new Armies. Their tastes are hurt by some particular advertisement. They assert that "every kind of unfair pressure and sensational appeal" has been utilized. And they see nothing in this great uprising of a nation but a "cruel and chaotic compulsion" instead of "an organized and merciful one." And it is true that every kind of appeal has been exercised and every demand satisfied. So that instead of the much-desired uniformity of numbered conscripts we have in the new Armies "Pals' Battalions" and "Bantam Battalions," and battalions raised to represent particular towns or occupations; and Irish brigades for those who will only fight as Irishmen, and a Welsh Army to satisfy the demands of the Welsh, and all tastes and variations possible to suit the demand of "Volunteers."

And it is true also that motives are as various as human nature can provide. Any reader can provide experi-

ence of half a dozen, all different. I think of one friend living in a poor tenement in East London. "My husband," said his wife, "he signed the paper that came round. He said he'd be a coward if he didn't. He took it that way. He's going to the London Scottish." "It was Bank Holiday," is the confession of another, "and my husband says, 'Coming for a blow?' And I says, 'I don't mind if I do.' So we went down to the City, and he says, 'Wait here a bit; I shan't be long.' So I waited and waited, and when he came I said, 'You *have* been a time.' Whatever have you been doing?" And he said, "That's Scotland Yard, and they've took me." And three times he's been rejected because he was short—three times! First time me and my sweetheart's been parted all the time we've been married—thirteen years." And sometimes the appeal comes also in a common wave of anger, sweeping away the considerations of prudence or of fear. "I stood on an apple barrel in the market place," relates a recruiter in a northern town, "and I shouted, 'The King's Own — have been wiped out. There isn't any more King's Own —. And they've killed old X (a well-known athlete). What have you got to say to that?' It was the dinner hour, and we got nearly a thousand men enrolled."

Some are consciously fighting for England and the Empire; some for what they believe to be a just cause; and some for hatred of Germany or indignation at German atrocity. There are those who desire to emulate their friends and those who desire their friends to be avenged. Some have entered from vanity, some from cowardice; others from courage, or to escape undesired employment, or from simple love of adventure, or because they must go when all are going. And if the purist is offended at such mixture

of motives, and disdains the advertisements and persuasions which appeal to such mixture, we can only reply that this is just England, and the English way; that this Army is an epitome of the life of England; that England cannot and will not do its work otherwise. For this is a people of whom it is as true to-day as when Froissart wrote of them six hundred years ago, that it was a race the most placable and easily persuaded not to enter into a quarrel; but once in, the most difficult of all to conquer or to appease.

So they pass, a piece of the life of England and these islands, to take their part in the great struggle, all unconscious that the universe in which they have lived and labored is crashing to pieces around them, and that they are witnessing the end of a world. They will appear in history, in the flare of that enormous sunset, cheerful, resolute, unafraid. As they lived in field and forge and factory, so they live in camp and fortress, so they face hardship and danger; so they die. The bulk of them have always lived near "the margin," and therefore near the realities of life; in face of dangers, ironworkers manipulating molten metal, coal-miners exchanging only—as one said—explosion in the daylight for explosion in the dark; fishermen who have fought from childhood against the peril of the sea; or the poor whose minished and bleak days have only been rendered endurable by the simplicity, comradeship, and perpetual chaff and humor which sweetens the common toll. "Times is always slack six months after Christmas and six months before; in between we're busy," was the cheery comment of one who had gone to the front—seeking "better times" in the stress and havoc of war. They will—in one mood—sing mournful hymns with great relish. In another they will

march into a burning city, with buildings crashing round them in fire and flame, to the cheerful lilt of "Here we are again." I have heard them finding satisfaction in the drone of a dolorous chant, the first line three times repeated, in a crescendo of gloom, "Yes, Kitchener loves me, The Bible tells me so." I have heard them stepping out to the latest ragtime melody or the inspiring accents of "Who's Your Lady Friend?" Now grumbling, now applauding, with their own standards of excellence in officers or leaders; one day determined to "chuck the whole thing up," the next dying to a man rather than surrender; peaceable in the main, but roused to dreadful wrath by the death of comrades or by "unfair fighting," they have been welded into that British infantry which has kept the line in France and Flanders, whose battles will read in the record of the future as the record of gigantic effort, of courage, endurance, and pain. It is a "Grand Army" which will continue the work it has begun until that work is completed. It will never lack resolution or reinforcement. For it is an army of men who can encounter death with laughter, and go down singing into silence.

So much for the temper of the Armies. What of those who have stayed behind?

In face of this charge of apathy and indifference one can assert definitely that it is difficult to find any family which is not in some manner contributing through money or service to the welfare of the cause. There is no ostentatious parade of it. The common, abundant life flows on. A surface view sees little changed. But one may reckon just the actual gifts gathered together in ten months as voluntary offerings collected for the war. An observer who has most power of

judging, Mr. W. E. Dowding,¹ estimates that, in addition to individual gifts of friends and relatives, twenty-five millions at least, in money or kind, has been raised for the various funds of charity or service since the war's beginning; and this in face of (what no other belligerent nation has ventured to attempt) an immense increase in taxation—the doubling of the income-tax and a huge advance in the Beer and Tea Duties. Five and a-half millions to the National Relief Fund, another three millions to local relief funds, nearly one and a-half millions for the Red Cross, over a million for Belgian refugees, five millions at least for direct gifts to the soldiers—tobacco and comforts to the Army and the Fleet—so runs on the amazing catalogue of benefaction, with scores of special funds for all our Allies, a Belgian Famine Fund, a Serbian Relief Fund, a Russian Relief Fund, a Fund for Relief in Poland, in Montenegro—even a Fund for Turkish Relief, on the ground that the Turks were misled by Germany in entering into this war. And all these huge funds have been collected at a time when the City and high finance have been badly hit, and many of the wealthiest contributors to normal charities are unable to provide a penny. They have been raised by contributions from all classes; with regular subscriptions by the weekly wage-earners—in Birmingham alone (for example) 20,000 of such wage-earners contributing their weekly pence; in Northumberland and Durham the trade unionists voting a weekly levy on wages for the trade unionists of Belgium; in Glasgow and

on the Clyde which attained some unenviable notoriety during the drink controversy, "Nothing is more remarkable" (so the statement runs) "than the regularity and the amounts paid by the workers themselves towards one or other of these national purposes." There has been practically no fraud. The cost of collection has been reduced to a minimum. City and country districts have vied with each other in honorable competition to do something for an Army which to-day is recognized as part of the very body and life of the people, for the dependents who are left behind, and for those of our friends and Allies who have suffered from the indescribable calamity of war. And when there is added to these public enterprises all the personal effort for individuals, friends, or unknown soldiers or civilians in misfortune, one can rightly estimate and dismiss with the contempt and also with the indignation which such gross calumny deserves the charges of indifference and unwillingness to make sacrifice which are being brought against our people.

Baffled by the greatness of charity, the accusation of selfishness and lethargy turns to that of normal labor. Our working people are pictured as solely concerned with their own selfish interests, threatening or even making strikes in industries which are essential to the Army and Fleet, expending their increased wages in lassitude and drink. How far is this a true picture of industrial Britain, how far imperfect and unjust deductions from a small minority in districts and trades of special difficulty, such as shipbuilding and engineering on the Clyde and part of the Tyne? It is not too much to state that, in the vast majority of cases, strikes or lock-outs, both sides have a real case, and that the outward and ostensible cause is rather a flag or symbol of dissension than the vital

¹ Mr. Dowding is shortly publishing in book form a permanent record of this magnificent output of voluntary effort, which will include not only the history of the great funds with their enormous totals, but also the account, more difficult to obtain, of thousands of lesser private charities to hospitals, with loans of houses and gifts of kind, and even such items as 15,000 fresh eggs, presented every day to the hospitals, or the 47,000 razors collected by the master cutlers of Sheffield for the use of soldiers at the front.

cause of disputes. All over England prices have risen substantially; in some trades only have increased wages equalled this rise. Have the real wages of the worker and family not substantially diminished owing to or since the outbreak of the war? Simultaneously, the workman has been told, and undoubtedly believes, up and down the country, that some employers and traders are making vast profits out of his necessities. The facts may be true or false; the belief in the facts is indisputable. Nothing rouses him to greater indignation than the idea that he is being asked to work harder, to work overtime, to exercise unusual temperance and restraint, to abandon his customary pleasures, in order to bring fortunes in a national emergency to private persons. The workmen, skilled and unskilled, alike, have responded magnificently to the Government appeal. If a further response is desired this point must be cleared up, and the policy definitely established in a manner which they can understand: that no one is to obtain profits out of the national necessity, or exploit the workman under the guise of patriotic fervor.

Where he is assured of this fact his efforts are found to be astonishing. In one sample week in Portsmouth Dockyard, 78 per cent of the workmen are found to be working for 60 hours or over, 12 hours or more in excess of the normal working hours of the week; 72 per cent are working over 65 hours a week; and "the above statistics," is the official announcement, "may be taken as typical of all the Admiralty dockyards." Much of this is manual or skilled labor of an exceedingly exhausting character; and it has continued week after week since the commencement of the war. Any shortage that may have occurred in special forms of munitions of war must be put down far more to lack of

organization, or to the intrinsic impossibilities of the situation, than to slackness on the part of the workmen employed. In a few months war has been transformed. Battle—in the historic meaning—has ceased to exist. Formerly we provided enough ammunition to destroy a line or column. Then came the demand for sufficient to destroy a fort or trench. Now nothing is of use except the blowing to pieces of a whole country-side—columns, trenches, fortresses, houses, and villages, all consumed in a hurricane of flame. The production of munitions adequate to that "hurricane of flame" cannot be a work of days. A French paper states that whereas less than 800 projectiles were expended in one day by the Japanese in Manchuria, the number hurled on the Russians by the Germans at Dounaletz in four hours was 700,000. The raising of the 800 per day standard to the 700,000 per four-hour standard is the work undertaken by the Minister of Munitions. He has rightly begun with an appeal to reason, not to force, by a demonstration of the necessity and by request for aid. Already it is evident that his appeal will no more lack response than the appeal for service abroad. England—employer and employed—merely wants to be told what to do, and will immediately go and do it. Never was more apparent the offering of "universal service" of the highest kind—the freewill offering of men's best, the "willing and organized help of every class in the community," for service in a perilous and righteous cause.

Theatres and music-halls continue their work of providing amusement or relaxation at home; an offence to the more violent and hysterical spirits. You will find them crowded with men in khaki and their friends, some men above fighting age, a few children. Only rarely do you find those who are

obviously eligible for the war. Lincoln declared once, when they remonstrated with him for attendance at the playhouse, that but for some such relaxation he would "burst." And the visitors who seek these entertainments are, in the main, seeking relaxation from thought which would otherwise prove intolerable. "*Le soleil ni la mort,*" said La Rochefoucauld, "*ne se peuvent regarder fixement.*" And "la mort" to-day is bringing its irrevocable message alike to castle and to cottage. But in London all the great palaces of pleasure have been transmuted for war services: the Crystal Palace for the training of the Naval Brigade, the Alexandra Palace on the Northern Heights for internment, Earl's Court in the West for Belgian refugees, the White City for Territorials, Olympia for military purposes. Even the parks and playgrounds in these hot June days are full of the activity of aircraft, or places of convalescence for the wounded, or noisy with the tramp of armed men. To similar service have been dedicated the great country houses. It is a people awake—thinking of war and nothing else by daylight, dreaming of war in the darkness; each only desirous of doing "his bit"; none, indeed, imagining for a moment the possibility of defeat; a people resolute and unafraid.

For as in the old legend, the seven who slumber in their cave at Ephesus have turned in their sleep. Old things are passing away: all things are being made new. What that new society will be beyond the cataclysm remains to-day mysterious, incalculable. Let us at least record that in the world which is vanishing, and at the time of sudden test and challenges, the mettle and the temper of our people rang true. We must emerge from the chatter of the London clubs, the noise of political intrigue, the "blind counsels of hysteria and panic" of an irrespons-

ble journalism, and in an England to which these things are alien we shall find a spirit confronting danger and accepting sacrifice which should renew the pride in our island race. I have seen this spirit in the manufacturing North, amongst a tough and hardy people—the hardest to drive in the world, and the easiest to lead. In these gray cities, confronting a war which came to them as a thunderbolt from a cloudless sky, they became deliberately convinced that by no honorable means could this war be avoided. They settled down with quiet, unyielding determination to see it through. Occupied seemingly with their work and their pleasure, giving their help in their own way, stiff-necked and obstinate if they think they are being "done," they are offering every kind of effort and sacrifice in men and means. They raise battalion after battalion of fighting men; they entertain refugees from abroad; they organize care for the relatives of those who have gone. I have seen this spirit in the little-known life of the real London, the million-peopled, unknown City of Labor which surrounds the Metropolis of Luxury and Splendor. I have found in that unending labyrinth of small, gray streets a generous sharing of precarious wages, endurance, an heroic patience, while so many of those who can fight have vanished into the vast and unknown regions beyond the city or beyond the sea. And I have found it in little South-country villages now in the pageant and glory of high summer, with every suggestion of violence banished from that triumphant vision. Only on the church door is inscribed the "Roll of Honor," names, most of them, of humble laboring men, who led lives of unremitting toil for limited reward. They have all responded to the appeal. Many have already given the last full measure of devotion—

their lives, that the nation may live. And I find no extravagance in the great hope expressed by the Prime Minister, that there will be found before the end not a home nor a workshop over the United Kingdom which did not take its part in the common struggle and earn its share in the common triumph. The temper of our people:—it is the temper of a nation called suddenly into battle and sacri-

The Contemporary Review.

fice against a State fashioned for and delighting in the bloody work of war. It is a temper which will endure to the end, however great that sacrifice, however bitterly that end may be delayed. But it is the temper of a people loving peace; fighting for and longing for peace: for "a peace which will come soon, and come to stay, and so come as to be worth the keeping, in all future time."

C. F. G. Masterman.

THE GERMAN IDEA OF DEATH.

When we see a people like the German people; given to "*Gemüthlichkeit*," loving warm rooms, red wine, and comfortable women, enjoying, too, the shade of woods, the songs of birds, the romance of evening—a people confident in itself and its destiny, proud of its knowledge and achievements—when we see such a people rushing to death almost as to a festival, we are provoked to thought. Everyone is facing death nowadays, but we feel that the German faces it with a difference, or rather with a comparative indifference. Is there anything in his creed or his customs which accounts at all for this comparatively ready surrender of a life which one might have expected him to have cherished with fervor?

Catholic Germany can, of course, be only subconsciously influenced, if influenced at all, by any other view of death than that which expresses itself in the penitent cry for "Mercy" inscribed above the grave. For any national peculiarity in the view of death one must look elsewhere. A fancy like that of Novalis, who saw the river of death as forming the blue sky of Paradise, implying that our world here is but a topsy-turvy planet which death will turn right side up, will not help us much; nor will beautiful poems about children who come from the

hand of God and return to it again help us, for such thoughts occur to all. Schiller's dying Talbot, speaking of his "flitting dust" and "transient atoms" and "hollow shows" will not help us either, for he only says what Hebrew poets and Pagan philosophers have said centuries before, and said better. We are looking for something below these universal aspects of death, something nearer to the soil and more native to the country.

We shall perhaps find a clue to the German feeling about death in the childlikeness and even childishness which accounts for so much that is amiable and so much that is aggravating in the German character. Their national epic, the *Nibelungenlied*, is full of the simplicity, the directness, and the bloodthirstiness of the very young. The Greeks spared Helen of Troy, although her faithlessness had "launched a thousand ships and burned the topless towers of Ilium"; the Welsh and the Bretons spared guilty Guinevere; but Chriemhilde, whose white and red and gold beauty is felt all through the *Nibelungenlied*, although guiltless of all but natural pride and loss of temper, is driven to hew off the head of her husband's enemy with her own hands—hands most skilful in all fair embroid-

ery, most ready to work in the adornment of brother, husband, or vassal; and she herself is hewn in pieces: "*Ze stücken was gehouwen dô daz edele wip.*"

Horror has been piled on horror, men have fought and bled and burned at once, friend and foe lie at last in one heap of death, and Chriemhilde, the kind, the gentle—she who had always been the joy of her lord, tender, hospitable, generous, and skilled in all queenly exercises—has become a raging incarnation of revenge, mangling and mangled. There is a terrible contrast between the earlier allusions to Chriemhilde, the comfort that Siegfried had in her, her dignity as wife, mother, and queen, her attending maidens, her fair raiment, the respectful admiration everywhere given to her, so that all men envy Siegfried as they see him move beside her, and this description of her end, of her vain shrieks as the sword of Hildebrand smites and divides her woman's body.

Those who sang this song had strong nerves. They were no more disturbed by the sight of blood than are the little boys who hang about the doors of a slaughter-house. Death is a disaster perhaps to such men, but it is not an outrage. There is mention in the *Nibelungenlied* of Church and Mass and Christ, but the heroes are formed on the pattern of the Scandinavian gods and are much more fitted for the pleasures of Asgard than for the joy of any Christian Paradise.

In the purity of the home-life, the courage and loyalty of the men, the chastity and kindness of the women, in the fierceness of pride and the jealousy of precedence, in the abandonment to anger and revenge, in the indifference to slaughter, the *Nibelungenlied*—or, as the older phrase has it, the *Nibelunge Nôt*, the "Distress of the Nibelungs"—is truly German, and it is German, too, in its literary excellence.

And from the day when its stanzas were first sung to the present year, that acceptance of death, and particularly of death as an incident in loyal service, has continued. To a race of warriors, death meant death by the sword, a death ennobled by heroism, a death that could be sung of in years to come. There was honor in death, and so when Hildebrand, in the *Lied*, sees Chriemhilde's victim bleeding upon the ground, his concern is not that Hagen is dead, but that he fell by a woman's hand, and his feeling is that the woman must not live to tell the tale and so injure the warrior in his most precious possession, the fame of his death.

To a peaceful people, death, associated as it is with old age and disease, is a humiliation to be undergone; to a warlike race it is often a triumph to be achieved. The spirit of a man seems never to be so controlled by old racial instincts and feelings as in the presence of death, and many a one unaware of being influenced by superstition in his daily life yet yields to a thousand fables as he stands shivering in the house of death. The howling of a dog, the hooting of an owl, the "ticking" of an insect, the beak of a bird at the window, a snail on the window-pane, a plant flowering out of season, a cloth oddly creased, all these become charged with occult meaning. Death seems determined to be old-fashioned as well as old. So, with the Germans, Death still wears the hero's coat of mail rather than the pale shirt of the sick man. When Novalis writes to one brother of the death of another he says: "Be of good courage, Erasmus has prevailed." So this day the German is carried to his grave with victor's palms and laurel wreaths, and there is a vague, subconscious feeling that somehow in dying a man deserves well of his Maker, that, in paying "the debt of Nature," he has

established a claim upon Nature's God. Perhaps it is partly owing to this old heroic idea of death, as also, no doubt, to the strong family loyalty of German people, that the burial-ground, the God's acre, or the churchyard, is, as a rule, so well cared for. On any summer afternoon, particularly on any holiday afternoon, a little stream of people may be seen carrying water-can and trowel and passing in one direction where cypresses show among the laburnums and lilacs. And if one follows them one will see that there is sometimes as much pride as sorrow behind the care of the grave. A dead person in a grave is still a possession, and the simpler people at any rate do not feel that mother, child, or lover is not there. An old peasant woman will tell you her history and say that her sons have been gone to America this many a year, that her man—her husband—has been long in the churchyard, and only one daughter is still in the house with her. She will feel much more at ease about that husband whose grave she can tend than about the sons in America whose beds are made she knows not how and whose deaths are still to be won. The dead are always referred to as blessed or happy—*selig*, and there is much less reserve in speaking of the dead than there is with us.

It is perhaps because the dead are often considered as existing in a state of death, not merely as having passed through death to some other life, that the graves of Protestant and materialistic Germany are so well kept, while in believing Brittany, for instance, one may see the shrine beautiful, the grave often neglected, the family chapel full of flowers, the family skulls tumbling about half exposed in a dilapidated charnel-house.

The certainty that the living will occupy themselves with the dead softens the idea of death. A man of

no particular faith, knowing that he will soon die, sees himself not so much cut off from all life as made the centre of a limited but real world. His imagination pictures the scene of his burial with himself as the hero. He has stood many a time in a half sad, half pleasing drowsiness before the grave of another, and he is consoled to think that others will so stand before his grave. The song "*Wie sie so sanft ruhen*" deals with this feeling. The melody is sweet and mournful, the words, judged by English standards, come perilously near the bathos of "In the churchyard, O my darling." Bencken is the writer. He says:—

How sweetly they rest, all the blessed to whose dwelling-place my soul is now gliding! How sweetly they rest in their graves, down to corruption deeply sunken! And no more weep here where sorrow holds sway, and no more feel here where joy flies away, but softly sheltered by cypresses they sleep till the angel shall call them forth. And when amongst them, fleet as a rose's beauty, sunk down, mouldering in an urn of ashes, early or late, dust to dust, my buried bones shall lie, then, if quietly and alone a friend warm with sympathy should pass by in the moonlight and should dedicate to my ashes a tear, as is fitting, and should sigh, mindful of friendship, his bosom filled with pious shudders, and think "Ah, how softly he rests!" I promise he shall hear a rustling, my shadow shall thank him.

The idea of this quasi-life in the grave, in the absence of logical cohesion, is like the idea of the life of the Fatherland. Sentiment has smothered reason. It is not very difficult to qualify for eternal rest if German justice is to examine one's claims. When Eduard, the hero of Goethe's *Wahlverwandtschaften*, is found dead with the tokens in his hand of a dead lady whom he had no business to love, the verdict is that, as he had fallen asleep thinking of the holy one, so one might

well call him blessed: "*Und wie er in Gedanken an die Heilige eingeschlafen war, so konnte man wohl ihn selig nennen.*" The "holy one," or saint, has starved herself to death because Eduard seemed unlikely to obtain a divorce or become free to marry her.

But Goethe's treatment of death is weak all through. His intense vitality may have had something to do with his attitude, the materialism of his day still more. As Richter said, "with the belief of Athelism the belief of Immortality is quite compatible; for the same Necessity which in this life threw my light dewdrop of a Me into a flower bell and under a sun can repeat that process in a second life." But Goethe's attitude towards death was not so much that of Athelism as of a man so intensely occupied with living that he has no time to contemplate death. When, as an artist, he must introduce death, he fails and hurts his readers. In *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, after so painting Mignon that she becomes one of the most living persons in a book crammed with living persons, after winning for her the tenderest sympathy of the reader, he takes her pathetic little dead body and sets it in the midst of the tawdriest theatricallism. Boys in blue and silver with ostrich feathers fan the poor little shrine of a broken heart. Sham wings have been attached to the rigid yet so slight shoulders and a "preserving balm has been infused into her veins."

No wonder that Wilhelm kept his seat, "*er konnte sich nicht fassen,*" and one can only suppose that Goethe at that time had never loved a child. He misses here even the sense of dignity and pathos of death that might be expected from a pagan. He always misses the deep seriousness of our own Shakespeare. For Shakespeare never forgets what it is that arms Death with his worst sting. Whether the in-

nocent Hamlet or the guilty Clarence is contemplating the final sleep, he knows that not the sleep but the possible dreams, not the death but the judgment, is the terror for mortal men.

Perhaps Goethe was influenced by the Greek attitude towards death, of which Emerson says that "He (the Greek) looked at death only as the distributor of imperishable glory." But nearly five centuries before Christ the Greek had learned that death is no alchemist transforming all metals, however base, to gold, and that there may be consciences which neither poppy, mandragora, nor rue shall quiet. The ghost of Clytemnestra comes to complain of dishonor among the dead, a dishonor and disgrace which her violent death at her son's hands has not wiped out. German sentiment would consider that the pity of her death purified her and qualified her to rest with Alcestis. For there is something of the spoiled child in the cry of the German for rest, and something of the indulgent mother in the judgment of the survivors. The fractious child falls asleep, and the mother forgets all her day-long trouble.

The churchyard is above all a place where people are put to rest, and therefore it is a mental rest to visit it. In Jean Paul Richter's delightful tale, *Life of Quintus Fixlein*, the much-tried hero and heroine, married at last, escaped from the marriage house and seeking stillness, "wended up into the churchyard to preserve their mood." The son noticed his father's grave on which—

the wind was opening and shutting with harsh noise the small lid on the metal cross to let the year of his death be read on the brass plate within. An overpowering grief seized his heart with violent streams of tears, and drove him to the sunk hillock; and he led his bride to the grave and said: "Oh, thou dear, good father, couldst thou to-day but see the happiness of

thy son, like my mother! But thine eyes are empty and thy breast is full of ashes, and thou seest us not" . . . And with this embracing at a father's grave let the day of joy be holly concluded.

"I know you would have liked," Novalis writes to a friend, in connection with a visit to the grave of his dead love, "to stand by me and stick the flowers, my birthday gifts, one by one into her hillock." And no doubt the friend would have liked it. There was, probably, a railing round the grave enclosing a little garden with a little chair on which the mourner might sit and give himself up to the sentiment of the place. There is no doubt that this frankness of grief, this familiar and unabashed manner of mourning, lessens the pain of it, just as screaming is a relief to physical suffering. One need not think that because a pastor speaks of "ashes in the breast" he therefore denies a future life, but that life is in the very far future, and perhaps the judgment, too, is almost indefinitely postponed; meanwhile there is a state of being dead, and the prayer everywhere repeated above the dead is "*Ruhe Sanft*"—"Rest sweetly," varied now and again by the bold statement "Here rests in God." For a moment the latter words suggest a great advance in faith upon the prayer "Rest sweetly," but after all it does not say much—"Here, in the churchyard, rests in God"—we never get far from the homely earth.

Where the German tales and legends show a horror of death, it is not because death as such is so terrible, but because the want of deadness in the dead is so awful. They rise at midnight from their graves and hold a shadowy, unreal mockery of divine service in the church, and the passer-by dare not raise his eyes to see if the gleam upon the church windows is due to the ghost within or the moon

without. Again, the dead have been known to come from their graves, to lay aside their winding sheets and dance, rattling in their naked bones.

But, on the whole, the dead and the living are comforted by proximity, and there are widows of whom it might be said that their life centres about a grave as the life of the mother of Marius the Epicurean centred about the funeral urn of her husband. "To the dead," says Pater, "was conceded in such places a somewhat closer neighborhood to the old homes they were thought still to protect than is usual with us, . . . a closeness which the living welcomed, so diverse are the ways of our human sentiment."

To the devout of all nations death is apt to color life, it is the prevailing tone by which other tones are measured. To borrow a term from another art, it is the *motif* of the piece, but to the German it seems often to be rather a supporting accompaniment, a bass movement giving fulness to the composition. The grave lends an esthetic charm to the betrothal joy. Death rounds off life as the night quiets and closes the day, and the poetry of death, as that of the night, makes even its terrors not wholly unpleasing. There is a comfort in its mournful circumstance. Höltz's *Elegy on the Death of a Country Girl* is almost entirely taken up with the description of the tolling bells, the wreath for the dead, the dirge, the dark raiment, the "death crown." We, with our "funerals," our "cemeteries," our "caskets" and "palls," our "wreaths" and "vaults," can dispose of our dead without mentioning death; but the German language is rich in words full of the shudder of death, of which Höltz in this elegy makes such use as can only suggest a relish for them. One line runs—

Und der Todtengrüber grübt ein Grab,
which might be rendered "And the

digger of the graves of death grave-digs a grave." Then there is the *Todtenkrone* and the *Todtenkranz*—the death crown and the death wreath—the *Sterbeglocken* or death bells, the *Leichentuche* or corpse cloth, the *Grabgesänge* or grave-songs, as well as the coffin, the open grave, the black streamers, and the tears.

Rückert, losing two children in one winter, finds comfort through the summer in decking their graves with flowers, but with the coming of frost this relief falls him and he turns to verse, like Tennyson numbing so his grief, but, unlike most Englishmen, preferring the service of the grave.

Nikolaus Lenau has a happier manner in the presence of death than most German poets. His is the story of the bird who sang upon the churchyard crucifix and returned unsaddened to its native copse, for

No singer ever suffered loss
From singing at the Christ's dear Cross.

He tells of the dead postilion who had been famous for his mastery of the horn, and how his comrade always halted his coach and four at the graveyard cross and sounded such a blast of greeting as he hoped might rouse his friend even in the deep rest of the grave. He tells, too, of the old beggar-woman carried to her rest under a torn corpse-cloth and with a battered and damaged crucifix upon her coffin, but recking little of the scornful miserliness of her burial, so deep is the peace to which she has won.

For Peace, Rest, this is the prevailing note in older men's thoughts of death, as Glory, Tragedy, Heroism mark the death music of the young. And, as said above, this rest is rather naively claimed as a right, as a child claims its cot or its mother's arms. Even Arndt, whose tone in his *Grave Song* is singularly beautiful, implies that when poor mortality is no longer

actively concerned with the work, distress, and danger of earthly life, it must therefore be enjoying an eternal spring, as though the pathos of man's sorrows and of his evening weariness must be irresistible, must melt the heart of Heaven.

Salls, in his poem *Das Grab*, has again the thought that only in the grave is one safe from the despair of the widowed bride, the orphan's cry; only in the deep hollow of the tomb dwells the longed-for rest.

And if we trace the note of glory in death to those old warriors of *Nibelungen* fame, can we trace this desire for rest to the Saxon love of home and the fireside and the long winter slumber while so much of the German soil is wrapt in snow? At all events, this desire for rest and peace rather than for release or for the freedom of a larger world is a characteristic German note. Even Goethe, whose untiring enthusiasm for living is one of his greatest and most captivating qualities, must join in the desire for, and the confidence of obtaining, this rest. Probably every one has a favorite translation of his *Über allen Gipfeln Ist Ruh'*, but the writer has none of these at hand and must apologize for giving here an unfamiliar one:—

The heights are wrapped in sleep,
Hill on hill.
Hushed is the forest deep,
Songless and still.
From East to West
One stirless, dreamless noon,
Ah wait! Soon, soon,
Thou too shalt rest.

We cannot, alas! think that there is any halfheartedness in the grief of German mothers to-day, but we may consider that there is a difference, a slight and subtle difference, between the manner in which the bulk of not particularly religious people in England regard death, and that in which similar people in Germany regard it.

The old heroes of the *Nibelungenlied* wept aloud when they knew they must die, but theirs was a physical, not a spiritual terror. The German general who is reckless of the lives of his men to-day is, probably, unconsciously swayed by racial inheritance. He is a little less aware of men going, as we say, "to their account." Death is to him a little less wasteful and a little more glorious than to us. One must also take into account the absence of individual value as compared with national value. It is possible that while his thoughts of death are shallow they yet lead him to keep Death, so to speak, in his place. We ourselves forget that while Death puts in the sickle it is Life who sows the crop, and we often place our fear in the wrong quarter.

Necessarily, the more one-sided views of death have been quoted above, but lest one should be unjust and suggest that moral earnestness is always lacking, that death is never considered as conditioned by life, Salis' poem *The Silent Land* is given here as it appears in Longfellow's *Hyperion*. If any

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reader does not already know it, he will be grateful for this introduction to it.

Into the Silent Land!
Ah! who shall lead us thither?
Clouds in the evening sky more darkly
gather,
And shattered wrecks lie thicker on
the strand;
Who leads us with a gentle hand
Thither, O thither,
Into the Silent Land?

Into the Silent Land!
To you, ye boundless regions
Of all perfection! Tender morning-
visions
Of beauteous souls! The Future's
pledge and band!
Who in Life's battle firm doth stand
Shall bear Hope's tender blossoms
Into the Silent Land!

O Land! O Land!
For all the broken-hearted,
The mildest herald by our fate allotted
Beckons, and with inverted torch doth
stand,
To lead us with a gentle hand
Into the land of the great departed,
Into the Silent Land!

Anna Bunston.

THE HAPPY HUNTING GROUND.

BY ALICE PERRIN.

CHAPTER VIII.

Up country, in India, October is a month of promise. The fierce hot weather and the steaming rains are over, English spirits rise, and English appetites come back, for the winter lies ahead—brilliant, cold, resuscitating—and an outdoor life can once again be pleasurable. Blankets and warm garments, redolent of neem-leaves, peppercorns, and camphor, are disinterred from tin-lined packing cases; guns and rifles are inspected, tents are aired and overhauled, collapsible camp furniture comes forth. A general renovation,

that corresponds to spring cleaning in the West, rouses the Sahib's establishment, both inside and without.

But this autumn there was peace in the Wendovers' house and compound. The Sahib was absent, and for the Memsahib there would be no camping this cold weather, no upheaval, and except for the taking down of punkahs, and the banishment of thermantidotes and kus-kus screens, the domestic routine would continue as before. The garden blazed with color. Scarlet, gold, and purple patched the creepers and the shrubs. The cherished stretch

of turf was parrot-green, and rosebuds, pink and white and crimson, were a sore temptation to the goats when they broke loose from their tethers. November was at hand, and the orange grove across the lawn was fragrant with ripening fruit and lingering blossom, dim with its canopy of dark-green, satin-polished leaves. Behind the grove ran a low, mud boundary, and beyond again a tract of ground, bare and unbroken save for one giant tree, a peepul, and, this morning, by a group of tents being pitched within its shade.

The newly-arrived camp was noisy with preparations. Folding-chairs and tables lay about in heaps, crockery, packing cases, straw littered the ground, an excited altercation was in progress around the spot chosen for the kitchen—two or three holes in the ground, a few bricks, some charcoal, and splinters of wood, a set of brightly-tinned copper vessels; with these a meal would presently be prepared that might have come direct from an Eagle range with the latest improvements. Long, low carts, little white bullocks, grumbling camels, a bamboo trap resting on its shafts, and a couple of ponies formed a picturesque fringe to the encampment, and native figures in various stages of dress and undress bustled to and fro.

The camp was that of the District Officer, acting for Mr. Wendover, who was absent on special duty. It was not worth John Severn's while to rent a bungalow for just the winter months, when his time must be spent chiefly on tour in the district. Since the commencement of his temporary charge the English community at Ranapore had seen but little of him, and, so far, were not over-anxious to see more. Certainly he had called round the station, but, as was obvious, only from a sense of obligation, and when he did

appear at the little club, where everyone forgathered in the evenings, his manners were unsociable and stiff. The members had not yet determined whether this was due to shyness or conceit.

At least this morning he looked nothing more objectionable than hot and hungry, for since dawn he had been on horseback, and he was glad to dismount from his chestnut country-bred, an ill-tempered little mare, with a mean eye and a thick neck. He shouted, and a syce came running from the background with an answering cry of "Sahib"—a table servant also emerged from the living-tent, presenting a note and a piece of bread, both on a cheese-plate.

Severn stood beside his pony while he read the note—a sturdy figure in long brown riding boots and loose tweed coat. It was not a pleasant face, the eyes gray, deep set, were cold and self-contained, there was an almost sullen hardness about the clean-shaven mouth and chin, though the outline of the head was good. An ugly old fox terrier, panting, impatient, hung at his heels, loth to leave him even for a much-required drink of water. Above was the serene blue sky, vast, unflecked by cloud; to one side the group of white tents, patterned with the shadow of the peepul tree, and to the other the low mud wall and grove of orange trees that bounded the magistrate's dwelling.

The letter was from Mrs. Wendover, inviting Mr. Severn to dine there quietly that night. He put it in his pocket, and held out the piece of bread on the palm of his hand to the chafing pony. Her temper was notoriously uncertain; Severn had bought her for a low sum on that account, but so far she had never permitted it to interfere with her customary treat at the finish of her work. Now, the delay occasioned by the reading of the note, while the bread

had lain so tantalizingly near, was too severe a test. With a vicious squeal she laid back her ears, showed the whites of her eyes wickedly, and snapped. Her master's two first right-hand fingers were caught as in a vice between her teeth.

At once there was an uproar. Servants ran and shouted, the dog flew barking at the pony's heels, sticks were brandished, dust rose in the air. Severn struck the animal's head with the whip he still held in his other hand. When at last he was free his fingers were a gruesome sight, crushed and bleeding. There were exclamations of dismay from the little crowd of natives, and much abuse of the evildoer. "Did we not always know," said one, "that the mare was a *badmash*, seeing that her forefoot is white?"

Severn rolled his damaged fingers in his handkerchief. The pain was acute, and he felt uncertain what to do. His sleeping-tent would not arrive just yet, and with it was the box in which he kept a few rough remedies in case of accident or illness—it could hardly be termed a medicine chest. Even were it here, none of his servants knew how to dress or bind a wound; and at this hour in the morning the civil surgeon would certainly be out. He sent a peon with a message to find the doctor, and went himself towards the bungalow beyond the orange grove in search of temporary ministrations and relief.

He stepped over the low mud wall, and found the path among the trees that would lead him to the lawn in front of the house. At the edge of the grove he halted, hesitating, for a few yards from him stood a girl, dressed in white, cutting roses. She looked at him with sweet brown eyes, the color in her cheeks matched the blooms in her basket, she displayed a slender, rounded throat when she raised her chin in her surprise.

The man's head felt light with want of food and the torture of his damaged hand, and she seemed to him more like an exquisite and misty apparition than a positive human being. His appearance and his pallor startled her; she dropped the roses and approached in swift concern. He swayed, and she caught him by the arm; for a second she actually supported him, her heart beating fast with apprehension lest he should faint and fall. It was an awkward moment for them both, but quickly over. He recovered himself, apologized, explained, and added, "My name is Severn."

Vaguely he wondered why she should flush and look so scared, as though her impulse was to run away, but she only said, "Please come with me to the house—don't delay—my aunt will see to your hand. I am Mrs. Wendover's niece—come." She hastened him into the house.

"Who is on my side, who?" Providence, in the guise of a vicious pony!" was Rose Wendover's triumphant thought, a good deal later in the day. John Severn, doctored by Colonel Watts, the civil surgeon, bandaged, eased of pain, sat in the verandah in a cushioned basket-chair, and Caroline had been sent out to keep him company while her aunt wrote letters in the drawing-room.

It seemed almost a miracle to Mrs. Wendover that this accident should have happened within a fortnight of Carol's coming. She had felt doubts as to how the two would agree. She had feared that the natural reserve from which they both suffered might block all chance of friendship between them, not to consider any stronger feeling, at the outset. She had formed visions of chilly antagonism on the man's side and dull indifference on that of the girl—Severn taciturn, unwilling to be pleasant, her niece detached and prim. But owing to this

timely disaster the man appeared grateful and Carol shyly sympathetic, so that the anticipated difficulties of a first introduction were no longer to be feared. They were already talking in the verandah, with some restraint, perhaps, and pauses, but not as utter strangers, not as though mutually repelled by the singular defensiveness that often assails even the most sociable of men and maidens on a first acquaintance.

Rose Wendover did what we are told as children no grown-up person ever attempts to accomplish—two things at once. She wrote her letters, and listened to the scraps of conversation on the other side of the split bamboo blind.

"How do you like India?" Mr. Severn inquired.

"That is the first question everybody asks me," said Caroline, with an amiable little laugh. "At home they always used to say, 'What have you been doing with yourself lately?' Here it is, 'How do you like India?'"

"And out here what do you say?"

She hesitated. "It is a great change, of course—you see, I only arrived a fortnight ago. Everything is very different."

"Yes, the people and the animals, and the birds and the fruit, even the very air and the hours."

"It is all very bewildering, but I suppose I shall get used to it and like it——"

"There is a great deal to like, and a great deal to understand," he said slowly, "even if you see no more of India than Ranapore. The conditions of English life out here have no exact parallel anywhere else. It's a marvellous experience—if you care to make it so—in spite of all its drawbacks."

His voice was gentle, earnest. Mrs. Wendover could hardly credit that the speaker was the same unfriendly,

curt, yet, of course, estimable civilian she had hitherto endured simply because he would, for mundane reasons, be a desirable husband for her niece. She queried, now, if he might not possess qualities, apart from his reputed brains, that were concealed from his fellow-creatures by his disagreeable attitude towards them, whatever was its cause—shyness, self-repression, or even a natural hostility.

Also, to her surprise, Carol was responding to his present mood of amiability; she was ingratiating, pleasantly polite; she asked questions, made remarks which Rose hardly imagined could have emanated from her mind—about the country, the natives, and problems of administration. And Mr. Severn grew really eloquent over his theories and opinions, voicing arguments that the match-making aunt suspected must be far above her marketable niece's comprehension; at any rate, they were above her own, even with her long and intimate acquaintance with the country.

She observed the couple through the transparent "chick"—looked at the pretty English girl in her white gown, leaning a little forward in a gracefully attentive pose; at the man so much more natural in his unaccustomed rôle of invalid than she had seen him yet. She noted the regular outline of his smooth, dark head, and the squareness of his jaw; certainly he was not bad-looking, but he lacked attraction, charm, his self-assurance was of another nature altogether from the easy air of Captain Falconer; it gave the impression of having been acquired, and tended rather to alienate than to invite appreciation. There was something in his personality that set him apart from his fellow-beings, and Rose wondered if he had been ill-treated as a boy; she felt it was impossible to gauge his actual disposition with any certainty—it would take a long time

to know and understand him, if it could be done at all.

Now she remembered that he ought to rest, for evening was approaching—the time of day in India when temperatures are apt to rise with very small excuse, and Mr. Severn's accident had not been slight. She joined the pair in the verandah, and ordered tea to be taken out there, and said she hoped Mr. Severn would have his things brought over from his camp—that he would "put up" with them until his hand was better.

"You will want looking after for a day or two," she told him sympathetically.

It is one of the triumphs of the best type of Anglo-Indian woman—her compassion for the sick, the lonely, and unlucky. With ready kindness she will take into her care some friendless youth stricken with any of the ailments, often deadly and infectious, that are so rife in India, and nurse him back to health; or perhaps, if Death defeats her, she will see him buried in the dreary cemetery and write the grievous tidings to his folk at home. She will mother helpless or incompetent young wives, and allow them to have babies in her bungalow; and a stranger is ever certain of her help and counsel. Generally speaking, the conditions of Indian existence may be said to foster the finest feminine qualities of the Englishwoman, though in some lamentable cases the life may develop the very worst—and then it is the individual, not India, that is to blame.

Mrs. Wendover rather expected that she would have to argue with her guest; that at first he would decline to be "looked after"; but he proved docile, and indeed he was not sorry to take advantage of comfortable quarters, in preference to his own make-shift, bachelor arrangements, which were tolerable enough when all

was well, but hardly conducive to quick recovery when physical disability was in question.

Purposely, after tea Rose took Caroline to the club, though she did not often patronize the little meeting-place; now and then, in consequence, she was accused of being "stuck-up," though allowances were made because she was not strong. The Indian club is an important institution, especially to the small official centre; in the large military station, where society is more changeful and interests are wider, it might not be so much missed. Nowadays, in some of these big headquarters it has even become unfashionable to frequent the station club. But in a little up-country community, such as Ranapore, it forms a valuable factor, a universal gathering spot where, for a small subscription, everyone may meet, take exercise in the form of games, see the English papers, and discuss each other's daily doings—the human, commonplace happenings and problems that, to the newcomer fresh from England, seem so trivial, so small. Yet the newcomer will himself descend to the keenest interest in such topics before he has been many months in India, since here are no theatres, music, pictures, lectures, libraries—no intellectual advantages, as such things are understood in England; and when work is over these people, all of one community, all of the earning class, all in exile, are dependent on each other for relief and recreation. It is inevitable in such circumstances that the trifles of everyday life should assume an importance that is out of all proportion to their value. There is only work and sport to be discussed among the men, and for the woman household questions, the illness of a neighbor's baby, somebody's new hat from home, the mail letters, cows, and khitmutghars, and poultry. It may sound very petty, very narrow, but,

after all, these people's lives contain a hidden and unconscious heroism that is perhaps more ennobling, when all is said and done, than the wider, fuller field of Western pleasure and resource. It teaches tolerance and patience, it engenders brotherhood and kindness, and a brave acceptance of such vicissitudes as would appear well-nigh intolerable to those at home.

The road from the Wendovers' dwelling to the club wasavenued with giant trees, the air this evening held a sharpness that was bracing. Ranapore was situated well towards the north, and the first range of hills that announces the Himalayas was visible from the station. Sometimes the snows could be glimpsed, distant, high, imperishable, and that was something to be proud of. Any place in India that can boast of "seeing the snows," however seldom, gains a superiority for service, for it means a longer winter. Driving her pony quickly through the stimulating air, Mrs. Wendover glanced at Caroline, seated placid and apparently contented at her side. The girl had seemingly accepted India, and the different mode of life, with such outward calmness as would point to her having, as yet, scarcely realized the change. Mrs. Wendover knew that Caroline was not inclined to enthusiasm, that she was slow to express her impressions, yet she was conscious of a change in her niece's attitude towards existence. There was a quiet independence, a purposefulness in her demeanor that had been absent when Rose said good-bye to her in England. Rose sometimes wondered if she had come out to India solely in the hope of again meeting Captain Falconer.

"What do you think of Mr. Severn, Carol?" she inquired.

Caroline's eyelids flickered. It amused her to remember that Aunt Rose knew nothing of her having read that fateful postscript—was unaware that they

shared the same purpose, carefully concealing from each other what was in their minds.

"He seems nice enough," she said, "but I think I like Mr. Stafford better."

This was the police-officer, an irrepressible, susceptible young man who attached himself persistently to Miss Gordon whenever he encountered her, and tormented Mrs. Wendover to let him teach her niece to ride. He and Mr. Maturin, the judge, were clearly inclined to pay pretty Caroline attention. In a small Indian station Caroline looked positively smart; her outfit was very simple, but she had profited by her aunt's advice on the matter of clothes, and her gowns and hats were a distinct improvement on her former wardrobe. At Ranapore her costumes were regarded almost in the light of Paris fashions.

Rose had become a little nervous on the score of Mr. Stafford, who was a good-looking youth, full of energy and spirits, just the kind of creature to give trouble to a chaperon. Everybody knew that a large proportion of his modest pay went home each month to help his mother, and that, though well connected, he was hopeless from a matrimonial standpoint. It was no secret that the wife of the roads and buildings engineer had been obliged to banish her sister to relations at Benares on account of Walter Stafford. Mr. Maturin, on the other hand, was not to be despised—falling Mr. Severn. Though a widower, he had no children, he was reputed to have private means as well as savings, and he was not altogether unattractive, despite his seniority. Carol might do worse, after all, than marry Mr. Maturin.

With the usual perversity of circumstance, Walter Stafford was standing in the club verandah when Mrs. Wendover and Caroline drove up. He hastened forth to help them from the trap, and at once persuaded the young lady to

join in a game of badminton, for she was useless on the tennis court. Rose sat down by Mrs. Watts, the civil surgeon's wife, whose daughter, Stella, with Mr. Maturin for partner, was winning applause for her dexterous back-handers. Stella was not pretty, but she could ride and dance and play games, and had a neat and active figure. Poor Mrs. Watts—homely, kind, and conscientious—was sadly dispirited by the arrival at Ranapore of Mrs. Wendover's elegant niece. She had begun to have serious hopes of Mr. Maturin for Stella; the judge appeared to recognize her daughter's worth, and there had seemed a likely chance of further appreciation on his part until this other girl arrived from England, with her new clothes, and her exquisite complexion, and her self-composed demeanor.

"It seems a pity," she remarked to her companion, "that your niece can neither play tennis nor ride. It's such an advantage to a girl to come out to India, so to speak, ready-made."

She did not add that her own girl had ridden well in India before she was sent home at the age of twelve, and had hardly been given time to forget the accomplishment before she was out again to save the school bills.

"Oh, my niece didn't come out altogether to amuse herself," said Rose placidly. "She came out to keep me company while my husband is away. It would hardly be worth her while to learn to do anything she hasn't been accustomed to do at home—it might make her feel discontented, too, when she goes back."

Mrs. Watts could not help remarking, "Do you think she will go back?" She was not really a spiteful person, but there were four boys at home who must be started in the world, and she and Stella had to make their own clothes, and "stay down" in the hot weather, and do without an ayah, that

education and holidays might be paid for punctually. She could not help envying Mrs. Wendover and her niece, though she admired, and liked them both.

"That remains to be seen," said Rose; and she lured Mrs. Watts from the subject of Caroline's future by speaking of Mr. Severn's accident that morning, and from that they talked of Mr. Severn himself.

"Not a very agreeable man?" Mrs. Watts suggested tentatively. "He strikes me as being the worst type of 'heaven-born' civilian"—she checked herself, remembering that Mrs. Wendover's husband was also in the Civil Service.

"They say he is exceptionally clever, though," was Mrs. Wendover's excuse for him. She knew how unpopular he had made himself in the station.

"To tell you the truth," said Mrs. Watts in confidence, "he doesn't strike me as being quite a gentleman, though out here that doesn't seem to stand in a man's way as long as he does his work well."

"Of course not. Work out here is the only consideration: but, at the same time, if a man belongs to the ruling class by birth it generally means that he does the kind of work required in India far better, don't you think? When you are dealing with gentlemen—and the people of India are gentlefolk by nature—you must be a gentleman to understand and govern them!"

"Oh yes," said Mrs. Watts, "the natives know in a minute."

"And in Mr. Severn's case," continued Mrs. Wendover evenly, "the natives adore him. That is his chief value as far as I can understand. He knows them, and they say a district runs so smoothly in his charge. I believe he was sent somewhere specially last year, and all trouble ceased at once."

Mrs. Watts felt no particular interest in Mr. Severn. She dropped the argument and watched her daughter's feats with a tennis racquet—became absorbed in observing how Mr. Maturin handed her the balls, and his evident admiration of her skill, and presently, when the game was over, how he helped her to put on her coat and followed her out to the verandah.

Silently Rose sympathized with Mrs. Watts' feelings. If Stella did not marry before Colonel Watts retired, what would the girl's future hold? Where in England would Stella come across men in the position of Mr. Maturin who could afford to marry, whose widow and children would have pensions, moderate pensions, certainly, but enough to keep them till the girls were married and the boys were twenty-one? For Stella, as a spinster, when her father had retired there would be no daily tennis, no riding in the mornings or at any other time, no constant male companionship. Rose did not condemn the mother for her hopes and apprehensions. Was she not engaged in a similar quest for Caroline, though to her the outcome of her undertaking was of nothing like the same importance?

For the sake of Mrs. Watts she felt almost glad that Walter Stafford quite prevented Mr. Maturin from approaching Carol when it grew too dark for outdoor games, though it was annoying of the boy—especially as she heard him planning the presentation of a puppy on the following morning, with distinct encouragement from Carol, who said, "What time will you come?"

Mr. Stafford looked at Mrs. Wendover. "Could I come to breakfast?" he suggested, and Carol complicated matters by a dumb demand for acquiescence. Clearly there was nothing to be said but "Yes, of course—about eleven." But it was tiresome, in view

of Mr. Severn's presence in the house.

By now the whole of Ranapore had collected in the club—that is to say, the entire official community—for farther away, beyond the big, echoing railway station, lived a large colony of Europeans and semi-Europeans connected with the line. The railway people also possessed their own club, their own area, almost their own laws. Ranapore was a large and important junction, and inspectors, guards, overseers, and engineer subordinates dwelt in ugly, little, staring houses, washed crudely blue, or white, or pink. Families of every shade of sepiæ were massed together in this quarter. They sat on round, masonry platforms in the bare compounds on hot-weather evenings, or collected at the Railway Institute for entertainments.

The railway officers were, of course, members of the Ranapore Club, contributing at the same time to the support of their subordinates' own place of recreation; but they were not often in the station. They and the irrigation men were perforce but occasional visitors to Ranapore during the cold weather, and indeed, at that time, the station was often half deserted, no one but the judge and the civil surgeon being exempt from camp work in the district.

This evening, as it happened, the gathering was comparatively large, and the rare presence of Mrs. Wendover added to the general satisfaction. For Carol's sake Rose sat and listened to Mrs. Watts' plans for making putwa jelly and tomato sauce; to Mrs. Close's grievance over an ungrateful ayah; to a terrible story of a faithless convert, related by Miss Arpen, who was the missionary's sister.

Later, in the cold stillness of the misty evening, she drove Carol back to the broad bungalow, already illuminated with oil lamps. On arrival they were told that Severn-sahib had gone

to bed, having a little fever—that he had entrusted his excuses and salaams to the old Hindu bearer, who regarded

the mem-sahib and the miss-sahib as in his special charge during the absence of his master.

(*To be continued.*)

THE FIRST HUNDRED THOUSAND.

BY THE JUNIOR SUB.

XIV. THE BACK OF THE FRONT.

I.

The last few days have afforded us an excellent opportunity of studying the habits of that ubiquitous attendant of our movements, the Staff Officer.

He is not always a real Staff Officer—the kind that wears a red hat-band. Sometimes he is an obvious “dug-out,” with a pronounced *embon-point* or a game leg. Sometimes he is a mere stripling, with a rapidly increasing size in hats. Sometimes he is an ordinary human being. But whoever he is, and whatever his age or rank, one thing is certain. He has no mean: he is either very good or very bad. When he is good he is very good indeed, and when he is bad he is horrid. He is either Jekyll or Hyde.

Thrice blessed, then, is that unit which upon its journey to the seat of war, encounters only the good of the species. To transfer a thousand men, with secrecy and despatch, from camp to train, from train to ship, from ship to train, and from train to a spot near the battle line, is a task which calls for the finest organization and the most skilful administration. Let it be said at once that our path to our present address has been almost universally lined with Jekylls. The few Hydes whom we have encountered are by this time merely a subject for amusing anecdote.

As for the organization of our journey—well, it was formulated upon Olympus, and was marked by those Olympian touches of which mention

has been previously made. For instance, immense pains were taken, by means of printed rules and official memoranda, to acquaint us with the procedure to be followed at each point of entrainment or embarkation. Consequently we set out upon our complicated pilgrimage primed with explicit instructions and ready for any emergency. We filled up forms with countless details of our equipment and personnel, which we knew would delight the heart of the Round Game Department. We divided our followers, as directed, into Loading Parties, and Ration Parties, and Hold Parties, and many other interesting subdivisions, as required by the rules of the game. But we had reckoned without the Practical Joke Department. The Round Game Department having furnished us with one set of rules, the Practical Joke Department prepared another, entirely different, and issued them to the officers who superintend such things as entrainment and embarkation. At least, that is the most charitable explanation of the course of action adopted by the few Mr. Hydes whom we encountered.

Two of these humorists linger in the memory. The first was of the type which is admiringly referred to in commercial circles as a hustler. His hustling took the form of beginning to shout incomprehensible orders almost before the train had drawn up at the platform. After that he passed from party to party, each of which was working strenuously under its own

sergeant, and commanded them (not the sergeant) to do something else, somewhere else—a course of action naturally calculated to promote unity and celerity of action all round. A perspiring sergeant who ventured to point out that his party were working under the direct orders of their Company Commander, was promptly placed under arrest, and his flock enjoyed a welcome and protracted breathing-space until an officer of sufficient standing to cope with Mr. Hyde—unfortunately he was Major Hyde—could be discovered and informed.

The second required more tactful handling. As our train-load drew up at the platform, the officer in charge—it was Captain Blaikie, supported by Bobby Little—stepped out, saluted the somewhat rotund Colonel Hyde whom he saw before him, and proffered a sheaf of papers.

"Good-morning, sir," he said. "Here is my train statement. Shall I carry on with the unloading? I have all my parties detailed."

The great man waved away the papers magnificently. (To be just, even the Jekylls used to wave away our papers.)

"Take those things away," he commanded, in a voice which made it plain that we had encountered another hustler. "Burn them, if you like! Now listen to me. Tell off an officer and seventy men at once."

"I have all the necessary parties detailed already, sir."

"Will you listen to me?" roared the Colonel. He turned to where Captain Blaikie's detachment were drawn up on the platform. "Take the first seventy men of that lot, and tell them to stand over there, under an officer."

Captain Blaikie gave the necessary order.

"Now," continued Colonel Hyde, "tell them to get the horses out and

on board that steamer at once. The rest of your party are to go by another steamer. See?"

"Yes, sir, perfectly. But——"

"Do you understand my order?" thundered the Colonel, with increasing choler.

"I do, sir," replied Blaikie politely, "but——"

"Then, for heaven's sake, carry on!"

Blaikie saluted.

"Very good, sir," he answered. "Mr. Little, come with me."

He turned upon his heel and disappeared rapidly round a corner, followed by the mystified Bobby.

Once out of the sight of the Colonel, Captain Blaikie halted, leaned against a convenient pillar, and lit a cigarette.

"And what do you think of that?" he inquired.

Bobby told him.

"Quite so," agreed Blaikie. "But what you say helps nobody, though doubtless soothing to the feelings. Now listen, Bobby, and I will give you your first lesson in the Tactical Handling of Brass Hats. Of course we might do as that dear old gentleman suggests, and send seventy horses and mules on a sea voyage in charge of a party of cooks, signallers, and machine-gunners, and let the grooms and drivers go with the bicycles and machine-guns and field kitchens. But I don't think we will. Nobody would enjoy the experiment much—except perhaps the mules. No: we will follow the golden rule, which is: When given an impossible job by a Brass Hat, salute smartly, turn about, and go and wait round a corner for five minutes. Then come back and do the job in a proper manner. Our five minutes are up: the coast should be clear. Come along, Bobby, and help me to exchange those two parties."

But we encountered surprisingly few Hydcs. Nearly all were Jekylls—Jekylls of the most competent and

courteous type. True, they were inclined to treat our laboriously completed returns with frivolity.

"Never mind those things, old man," they would say. "Just tell me who you are, and how many. That's right: now I know all about you. Got your working parties fixed up? Good! They ought to have everything cleared in a couple of hours. I'll see that a ration of hot tea is served out for them. Your train starts at a quarter past seven this evening—remember to call it nineteen-fifteen, by the way, in this country—and you ought to be at the station an hour before the time. I'll send you a guide. What a fine-looking lot these chaps of yours are! Best lot I've seen here for a very long time. Working like niggers, too! Now come along with me for ten minutes and I'll show you where to get a bite of breakfast. Expect you can do with a bit!"

That is Brass-Hat Jekyll—officer and gentleman; and, to the eternal credit of the British Army, he it said that he abounds in this well-conducted campaign. As an instance of his efficiency, let the case of our own regiment be quoted. The main body travelled here by one route, the transport, horses, and other details by another. The main body duly landed, and were conveyed to the rendezvous—a distant railway-junction in Northern France. There they sat down to await the arrival of the train containing the other party; which had left England many hours before them, had landed at a different port, and had not been seen or heard of since.

They had to wait exactly ten minutes!

"Some Staff—what?" as the Adjutant observed, as the train lumbered into view.

II.

Most of us, in our travels abroad, have observed the closed trucks which

are employed upon French railways, and which bear the legend—

Hommes . . . 40

Chevaux . . . 8

Doubtless we have wondered, idly enough, what it must feel like to be one of the forty *hommes*. Well, now we know.

When we landed, we were packed into a train composed of fifty such trucks, and were drawn by a mighty engine for a day and a night across the pleasant land of France. Every six hours or so we were indulged with a *Halte Répas*. That is to say, the train drew up in a siding, where an officer with R.T.O. upon his arm made us welcome, and informed us that hot water was available for making tea. Everybody had two days' rations in his haversack, so a large-scale picnic followed. From the horse-trucks emerged stolid individuals with canvas buckets—you require to be fairly stolid to pass the night in a closed box, moving at twenty miles an hour, in company with eight riotous and insecurely tethered mules—to draw water from the hydrant which supplied the locomotives. The infant population gathered round, and besought us for "souvenirs," the most popular taking the form of "biskeet" or "bully-bœuf." Both were given freely: with but little persuasion our open-handed warriors would have fain squandered their sacred "emergency ration" upon these rapacious infants.

After refreshment we proceeded to inspect the station. The centre of attraction was the French soldier on guard over the water-tank. Behold this same sentry confronted by Private Mucklewame, anxious to comply with Divisional Orders and "lose no opportunity of cultivating the friendliest relations with those of our Allies whom you may chance to encounter." So Mucklewame and the sentry (who is evidently burdened with similar in-

structions) regard one another with shy smiles, after the fashion of two children who have been introduced by their nurses at a party.

Presently the sentry, by a happy inspiration, proffers his bayonet for inspection, as if it were a new doll. Mucklewame bows solemnly, and fingers the blade. Then he produces his own bayonet, and the two weapons are compared—still in constrained silence. Then Mucklewame nods approvingly.

"Verra goody!" he remarks, profoundly convinced that he is speaking the French language.

"Oirigh! Tipperaree!" replies the sentry, not to be outdone in international courtesy.

Unfortunately, the further cementing of the Entente Cordiale is frustrated by the blast of a whistle. We hurl ourselves into our trucks; the R.T.O. waves his hand in benediction; and the regiment proceeds upon its way, packed like herrings, but "all jubilant with song."

III.

We have been "oot here" for a week now, and although we have had no personal encounter with the foe, our time has not been wasted. We are filling up gaps in our education, and we are tolerably busy. Some things, of course, we have not had to learn. We are fairly well inured, for instance, to hard work and irregular meals. What we have chiefly to acquire at present is the art of adaptability. When we are able to settle down into strange billets in half an hour, and pack up, ready for departure, within the same period, we shall have made a great stride in efficiency, and added enormously to our own personal comfort.

Even now we are making progress. Observe the platoon who are marching into this farmyard. They are dead tired, and the sight of the straw-filled barn is too much for some of them. They throw themselves down

anywhere, and are asleep in a moment. When they wake up—or more likely, are wakened up—in an hour or two, they will be sorry. They will be stiff and sore, and their feet will be a torment. Others, more sensible, crowd round the pump, or dabble their abraded extremities in one of the countless ditches with which this country is intersected. Others again, of the more enterprising kind, repair to the house-door, and inquire politely for "the wife." (They have long given up inquiring for "the master." There is no master on this farm, or indeed on any farm throughout the length and breadth of this great-hearted land. Father and sons are all away, restoring the Bosche to his proper place in the animal kingdom. We have seen no young or middle-aged man out of uniform since we entered this district, save an occasional imbecile or cripple.)

Presently "the wife" comes to the door, with a smile. She can afford to smile now, for not so long ago her guests were Uhlans. Then begins an elaborate pantomime. Private Tosh says "Bonjourr!" in husky tones—last week he would have said "Hey, Bella!"—and proceeds to wash his hands in invisible soap and water. As a reward for his ingenuity he receives a basin of water: sometimes the water is even warm. Meanwhile Private Tosh, the linguist of the platoon, proffers twopence and says: "Doolay—ye unnerstand?" He gets a drink of milk, which is a far, far better thing than the appalling green-scum-covered water with which his less adaptable brethren are wont to refresh themselves from wayside ditches. Thomas Atkins, however mature, is quite incorrigible in this respect.

Yes, we are getting on. And when every man in the platoon, instead of merely some, can find a place to sleep, draw his blanket from the wagon, clean his rifle and himself, and get to his dinner within the half-hour already

specified, we shall be able justly to call ourselves seasoned.

We have covered some distance this week, and we have learned one thing at least, and that is, not to be upplish about our sleeping quarters. We have slept in chateaux, convents, farm-houses, and under the open sky. The chateaux are usually empty. An aged retainer, the sole inhabitant, explains that M. le Comte is at Paris; M. Armand at Arras; and M. Guy in Alsace,—all doing their bit. M. Victor is in hospital, with Madame and Made-moiselle in constant attendance.

So we settle down in the chateaux, and unroll our sleeping-bags upon its dusty parquet. Occasionally we find a bed available. Then two officers take the mattress, upon the floor, and two more take what is left of the bed. French chateaux do not appear to differ much as a class. They are distinguished by great elegance of design, infinite variety in furniture, and entire absence of drains. The same rule applies to convents, except that there is no furniture.

Given fine weather, by far the most luxurious form of lodging is in the open air. Here one may slumber at ease, fanned by the wings of cock-chafers and soothed by an unseen choir of frogs. There are drawbacks, of course. Mr. Waddell one evening spread his ground-sheet and bedding in the grassy meadow, beside a murmuring stream. It was an idyllic resting-place for a person of romantic or contemplative disposition. Unfortunately it is almost impossible nowadays to keep one's favorite haunts select. This was evidently the opinion of the large water-rat which Waddell found sitting upon his air-pillow when he returned from supper. Although French, the animal exhibited no disposition to fraternize; but withdrew in the most pointed fashion, taking an Abernethy biscuit with him.

Accommodation in farms is best described by the word "promiscuous." There are twelve officers and two hundred men billeted here. The farm is exactly the same as any other French farm. It consists of a hollow square of buildings—dwelling-house, barns, pigstyes, and stables—with a commodious manure-heap, occupying the whole yard except a narrow strip round the edge, in the middle, the happy hunting-ground of innumerable cocks and hens and an occasional pig. The men sleep in the barns. The senior officers sleep in a stone-floored boudoir of their own. The juniors sleep where they can, and experience little difficulty in accomplishing the feat. A hard day's marching and a truss of straw—these two combined form an irresistible inducement to slumber.

Only a few miles away big guns thunder until the building shakes. Tomorrow a select party of officers is to pay a visit to the trenches. Thereafter our whole flock is to go, in its official capacity. The War is with us at last. Early this morning a Zeppelin rose into view on the skyline. Shell fire pursued it, and it sank again—rumor says in the British lines. Rumor is our only war correspondent at present. It is far easier to follow the course of events from home, where newspapers are more plentiful than here.

But the grim realities of war are coming home to us. Outside this farm stands a tall tree. Not many months ago a party of Uhlans arrived here, bringing with them a wounded British prisoner. They crucified him to that self-same tree, and stood round him till he died. He was a long time dying.

Some of us had not heard of Uhlans before. These have now noted the name, for future reference—and action.

XV. IN THE TRENCHES—AN OFF-DAY.

This town is under constant shell fire. It goes on day after day: it has

been going on for months. Sometimes a single shell come: sometimes half a dozen. Sometimes whole batteries get to work. The effect is terrible. You who live at home in ease have no conception of what it is like to live in a town which is under intermittent shell fire.

I say this advisedly. You have no conception whatsoever.

We get no rest. There is a distant boom, followed by a crash overhead. Cries are heard—the cries of women and children. They are running frantically—running to observe the explosion, and if possible to pick up a piece of the shell as a souvenir. Sometimes there are not enough souvenirs to go round, and then the clamor increases.

We get no rest, I say—only frightfulness. British officers, walking peacefully along the pavement, are frequently hustled and knocked aside by these persons. Only the other day, a full colonel was compelled to turn up a side street, to avoid disturbing a ring of excited children who were dancing round a beautiful new hole in the ground in the middle of a narrow lane.

If you enter into a café or estaminet, a total stranger sidles to your table, and, having sat down beside you, produces from the recesses of his person a fragment of shrapnel. This he lays before you, and explains that if he had been standing at the spot where the shell burst, it would have killed him. You express polite regret, and pass on elsewhere, seeking peace and finding none. The whole thing is a public scandal.

Seriously, though, it is astonishing what contempt familiarity can breed, even in the case of high-explosive shells. This little town lies close behind the trenches. All day long the big guns boom. By night the rifles and machine-guns take up the tale. One is

frequently aroused from slumber, especially towards dawn, by a perfect tornado of firing. The machine-guns make a noise like a giant tearing calico. Periodically, too, as already stated, we are subjected to an hour's intimidation in the shape of bombardment. Shrapnel bursts over our heads; shells explode in the streets, especially in open spaces, or where two important streets cross. (With modern artillery, you can shell a town quite methodically by map and compass.)

Brother Bosche's motto appears to be: "It is a fine morning. There is nothing in the trenches doing. We abundant ammunition have. Let us a little frightfulness into the town pump!" So he pumps.

But nobody seems to mind. Of course there is a casualty now and then. Occasionally a hole is blown in a road, or the side of a house is knocked in. Yet the general attitude of the population is one of rather interested expectancy. There is always the cellar to retire to if things get really serious. The gratings are sand-bagged to that end. At other times—well, there is always the pleasing possibility of witnessing the sudden removal of your neighbor's landmark.

Officers breakfasting in their billets look up from their porridge and say—

"That's a Dud! *That's* a better one! Stick to it, Bill!"

It really is most discouraging, to a sensitive and conscientious Hun.

The same unconcern reigns in the trenches. Let us imagine that we are members of a distinguished party from Headquarters, about to make a tour of inspection.

We leave the town, and after a short walk along the inevitable poplar-lined road turn into a field. The country all round us is flat—flat as Cheshire; and, like Cheshire, has a pond in every field. But in the hazy distance stands a low ridge.

"Better keep close to the hedge," suggests the officer in charge. "There are eighty guns on that ridge. It's a misty morning; but they've got all the ranges about here to a yard; so they might——"

We keep close to the hedge.

Presently we find ourselves entering upon a wide but sticky path cut in the clay. At the entrance stands a neat notice-board, which announces, somewhat unexpectedly:—

OLD KENT ROAD.

The field is flat, but the path runs downhill. Consequently we soon find ourselves tramping along below the ground level, with a stout parapet of clay on either side of us. Overhead there is nothing—nothing but the blue sky, with the lark singing, quite regardless of the War.

"Communication trench," explains the guide.

We tramp along this sunken lane for the best part of a mile. It winds a good deal. Every hundred yards or so comes a great promontory of sandbags, necessitating four right-angle turns. Once we pass under the shadow of trees, and apple-blossom flutters down upon our upturned faces. We are walking through an orchard. Despite the efforts of ten million armed men, brown old Mother Earth has made it plain that seed-time and harvest shall still prevail.

Now we are crossing a stream, which cuts the trench at right angles. The stream is spanned by a structure of planks—labelled, it is hardly necessary to say, LONDON BRIDGE. The side-street, so to speak, by which the stream runs away, is called Jock's Joy. We ask why?

"It's the place where the Highlanders wash their knees," is the explanation.

Presently we arrive at PICCADILLY CIRCUS, a muddy excavation in the earth, from which several passages

branch. These thoroughfares are not all labelled with strict regard for London geography. We note THE HAYMARKET, also PICCADILLY; but ARTILLERY LANE seems out of place, somehow. On the site, too, of the Criterion, we observe a subterranean cavern containing three recumbent figures, snoring lustily. This bears the sign CYCLISTS' REST.

We, however, take the turning marked SHAFTSBURY AVENUE, and after passing (quite wrongly, don't you think?) through TRAFALGAR SQUARE—six feet by eight—find ourselves in the actual firing trench.

It is an unexpectedly spacious place. We, who have spent the winter constructing slits in the ground two feet wide, feel quite lost in this roomy thoroughfare. For a thoroughfare it is, with little toy houses on either side. They are hewn out of the solid earth, lined with planks, painted, furnished, and decorated. These are, so to speak, permanent trenches, which have been occupied for more than six months.

Observe this eligible residence on your left. It has a little door, nearly six feet high, and a real glass window, with a little curtain. Inside, there is a bunk, six feet long, together with an ingenious folding washhand-stand, of the nautical variety, and a flap-table. The walls, which are painted pale green, are decorated with elegant extracts from *The Sketch* and *La Vie Parisienne*. Outside, the name of the villa is painted up. It is in Welsh—that notorious railway station in Anglesey which runs to thirty-three syllables or so—and extends from one end of the facade to the other.

"This is my shanty," explains a machine-gun officer standing by. "It was built by a Welsh Fusilier, who has since moved on. He was here all winter, and made everything himself, including the washhand-stand. Some carpenter—what? of course I am not here

continuously. We have six days in the trenches and six out; so I play Cox and Box with a man in the Midland Mud-crushers, who take turns with us. Come in and have some tea."

It is only ten o'clock in the morning, but tea—strong and sweet, with condensed milk—is instantly forthcoming. Refreshed by this, and a slice of cake, we proceed upon our excursion.

The trench is full of men, mostly asleep; for the night cometh, when no man may sleep. They lie in low-roofed rectangular caves, like the interior of great cucumber-frames, lined with planks and supported by props. The cave is really a homogeneous affair, for it is constructed in the R.E. workshops and then brought bodily to the trenches and fitted into its appointed excavation. Each cave holds three men. They lie side by side, like three dogs in a triple kennel, with their heads outward and easily accessible to the individual who performs the functions of "knocker-up."

Others are cooking, others are cleaning their rifles. The proceedings are superintended by a contemplative tabby cat, coiled up in a niche, like a feline flower in a crannied wall.

"She used ter sit on top of the parapet," explains a friendly lance-corporal; "but became a casualty, owin' to a sniper mistakin' 'er for a Guardsman's bearskin. Show the officer your back, Christabel!"

We inspect the healed scar, and pass on. Next moment we round a traverse—and walk straight into the arms of Privates Ogg and Hogg!

No need now to remain with the distinguished party from Headquarters. For the next half-mile of trench you will find yourselves among friends. "K(1)" and Brother Bosche are face to face at last, and here you behold our own particular band of warriors taking their first spell in the trenches.

Let us open the door of this spacious dug-out—the image of an up-river bungalow, decorated with window-boxes and labelled POTSDAM VIEW—and join the party of four which sits round the table.

"How did your fellows get on last night, Wagstaffe?" inquires Major Kemp.

"Very well, on the whole. It was a really happy thought on the part of the authorities—almost human, in fact—to put us in alongside the Old Regiment."

"Or what's left of them."

Wagstaffe nods gravely.

"Yes. There are some changes in the Mess since I last dined there," he says. "Anyhow, the old hands took our boys to their bosoms at once, and showed them the ropes."

"The men did not altogether fancy look-out work in the dark, sir," says Bobby Little to Major Kemp.

"Neither should I, very much," said Kemp. "To take one's stand on a ledge fixed at a height which brings one's head and shoulders well above the parapet, and stand there for an hour on end, knowing that a machine-gun may start a spill of rapid traversing fire at any moment—well, it takes a bit of doing, you know, until you are used to it. How did you persuade 'em, Bobby?"

"Oh, I just climbed up on the top of the parapet and sat there for a bit," says Bobby Little modestly. "They were all right after that."

"Had you any excitement, Ayling?" asks Kemp. "I hear rumors that you had two casualties."

"Yes," says Ayling. "Four of us went out patrolling in front of the trench—"

"Who?"

"Myself, two men, and old Sergeant Carfrae."

"Carfrae?" Wagstaffe laughs. "That old fire-eater? I remember him at

Paardeberg. You were lucky to get back alive. Proceed, my son!"

"We went out," continues Ayling, "and patrolled."

"How?"

"Well, there you rather have me. I have always been a bit foggy as to what a patrol really does—what risks it takes, and so on. However, Carfrae had no doubts on the subject whatever. His idea was to trot over to the German trenches and look inside."

"Quite so!" agreed Wagstaffe, and Kemp chuckled.

"Well, we were standing by the barbed wire entanglement, arguing the point, when suddenly some infernal imbecile in our own trenches——"

"Cockerell, for a dollar!" murmurs Wagstaffe. "Don't say he fired at you!"

"No, he did worse. He let off a fire-ball."

"Whew! And there you stood in the limelight?"

"Exactly."

"What did you do?"

"I had sufficient presence of mind to do what Carfrae did. I threw myself on my face, and shouted to the two men to do the same."

"Did they?"

"No. They started to run back towards the trenches. Half a dozen German rifles opened on them at once."

"Were they badly hit?"

"Nothing to speak of, considering. The shots mostly went high. Preston got his elbow smashed, and Burke had a bullet through his cap and another in the region of the waistband. Then they tumbled into the trench like rabbits. Carfrae and I crawled after them."

At this moment the doorway of the dug-out is darkened by a massive figure, and Major Kemp's color-sergeant announces—

"There's a parrrty of Gairmans gotten

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oot o' their trenches, sirr. Will we open fire?"

"Go and have a look at 'em, like a good chap, Wagger," says the Major.

"I want to finish this letter."

Wagstaffe and Bobby Little make their way along the trench until they come to a low opening marked MAXIM VILLA. They crawl inside, and find themselves in a semi-circular recess, chiefly occupied by an earthen platform, upon which a machine-gun is mounted. The recess is roofed over, heavily protected with sandbags, and lined with iron plates; for a machine-gun emplacement is the object of frequent and pressing attention from high-explosive shells. There are loopholes to right and left, but not in front. These deadly weapons prefer diagonal or enfilade fire. It is not worth while to fire them frontally.

Wagstaffe draws back a strip of sacking which covers one loophole, and peers out. There, a hundred and fifty yards away, across a sunlit field, he beholds some twenty gray figures, engaged in the most pastoral of pursuits, in front of the German trenches.

"They are cutting the grass," he says. "Let 'em, by all means! If they don't, we must. We don't want their bomb-throwers crawling over here through a hay-field. Let us encourage them by every means in our power. It might almost be worth our while to send them a message. Walk along the trench, Bobby, and see that no excitable person looses off at them."

Bobby obeys; and peace still broods over the sleepy trench. The only sound which breaks the summer stillness is the everlasting crack, crack! of the snipers' rifles. On an off-day like this the sniper is a very necessary person. He serves to remind us that we are at war. Concealed in his own particular eyrie, with his eye for ever laid along his telescopic sights, he

keeps ceaseless vigil over the ragged outline of the enemy's trenches. Whenever a head, or anything resembling a head, shows itself, he fires. Were it not for his enthusiasm, both sides would be sitting in their shirt-sleeves upon their respective parapets, regarding one another with frank curiosity; and that would never do. So the day wears on.

Suddenly, from far in our rear, comes a boom, then another. Wagstaffe sighs resignedly.

"Why can't they let well alone?" he complains. "What's the trouble now?"

"I expect it's our Divisional Artillery having a little target practice," says Captain Blaikie. He peers into a neighboring trench-periscope. "Yes, they are shelling that farm behind the German second-line trench. Making good shooting, too, for beginners," as a column of dust and smoke rises from behind the enemy's lines. "But brother Bosche will be very peevish about it. We don't usually fire at this time of the afternoon. Yes, there is the hay-making party going home. There will be a beastly noise for the next half-hour. Pass the word along for every man to get into his dug-out."

The warning comes none too soon. In five minutes the incensed Hun is retaliating for the disturbance of his afternoon siesta. A hail of bullets passes over our trench. Shrapnel bursts overhead. High-explosive shells rain upon and around the parapet. One drops into the trench, and explodes, with surprisingly little effect. (Bobby Little found the head afterwards, and sent it home as a memento of his first encounter with reality.)

Our trench makes no reply. There is no need. This outburst heralds no grand assault. It is a mere display of "frightfulness," calculated to cow the impressionable Briton. We sit close, and make tea. Only the look-out men,

crouching behind their periscopes and loopholes, keep their posts. The wind is the wrong way for gas, and in any case we all have respirators. Private M'Leary, the humorist of "A" Company, puts his on, and pretends to drink his tea through it.

Altogether, the British soldier appears sadly unappreciative either of "frightfulness" or practical chemistry. He is a hopeless case.

The firing ceases as suddenly as it began. Silence reigns again, broken only by a solitary shot from a trench-mortar—a sort of explosive postscript to a half-hour's Hymn of Hate.

"And that's that!" observes Captain Blaikie cheerfully, emerging from Potsdam View. "The Hun is a harmless little creature, but noisy when roused. Now, what about getting home? It will be dark in half an hour or so. Platoon commanders, warn your men!"

It should be noted that upon this occasion we are not doing our full spell of duty—that is, six days. We have merely come in for a spell of instruction, of twenty-four hours' duration, under the chaperonage of our elder and more seasoned brethren.

Bobby Little, having given the necessary orders to his sergeant, proceeded to Trafalgar Square, there to await the mustering of his platoon.

But the first arrival took the form of a slow-moving procession—a corporal, followed by two men carrying a stretcher. On the stretcher lay something covered with a ground-sheet. At one end projected a pair of regulation boots, very still and rigid.

Bobby caught his breath. He was just nineteen, and this was his first encounter with sudden death.

"Who is it?" he asked unsteadily.

The corporal saluted.

"Private M'Leary, sirr. That last shot from the trench-mortar got him. It came in kin' o' sideways. He was

sittin' at the end of his dug-oot, gettin' disappeared round the curve of his tea. Stretcher party, advance!" Shaftesbury Avenue. The off-day was

The procession moved off again, and over.
Blackwood's Magazine.

(To be continued.)

THE WORKMANSHIP OF "A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM."

Professor Jowett, famous Master of Balliol,—

But in the manner of Sterne I must break off, here at the outset, to recall that figure, so familiar to me in youth, as every morning he crossed the quad beneath my bedroom window in a contiguous college for an early trot around its garden; a noticeable figure, too, small, rotund, fresh of face as a cherub, yet with its darting gait and in its swallow-tailed dress-coat curiously suggestive of a belated Puck surprised by dawn and hurrying to—

"Hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear."
—Professor Jowett used to maintain that after Shakespeare the next creative genius in our literature was Charles Dickens.

As everybody knows, Dickens left an unfinished novel behind him; and a number of ingenious writers from time to time have essayed to finish the story of Edwin Drood, constructing the whole from the fragment—yet not from the fragment only, since in the process they are forced into examining the plots of other novels of his; so into recognizing that his invention had certain trends—certain favorite stage-tricks, artifices, *clichés*—which it took almost predicably; and so to argue, from how he constructed by habit, how he probably would have constructed this tale.

I do not propose, in a paper on *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, to attempt an ending for *Edwin Drood*, but I suggest that if inventive criticism, driven

up against such an obstacle to *Drood*, turns perforce to examine Dickens's habitual trends of invention, his favorite artifices and *clichés*, the same process may be as serviceable in studying the workmanship of the greater artist, Shakespeare.

For example, no careful reader of Dickens can miss to note his predilection for what I will call *Dénouement* by Masked Battery. At the critical point in story after story, and at a moment when he believes himself secure, the villain is "rounded on" by a supposed confederate or a supposed dupe; a concealed battery is opened, catches him at unawares, levels him with his machinations to the ground. Thus Monks brings about the crisis of *Oliver Twist*; thus Ralph Nickleby and Uriah Heep come to exposure; thus severally Jonas and Mr. Pecksniff in *Martin Chuzzlewit*; thus Quilp and Brass in *The Old Curiosity Shop*. Thus Hare-dale forces the conclusion of *Barnaby Rudge*; thus in *Bleak House* Lady Dedlock (though she, to be sure, cannot be reckoned among the villains) is hunted down. *Hunted Down*, in fact, name of one of Dickens's stories, might serve for any other of a dozen. Sometimes the denouncer—old Chuzzlewit, Mr. Micawber, Mr. Boffin—reaches his moment after a quite incredibly long practice of dissimulation. But always the pursuit is patient, hidden; always the coup sudden, dramatic, enacted before witnesses; always the trick is essentially

the same—and the guilty one, after exposure, usually goes off and in one way or another commits suicide.

I instance one only among Dickens's pet devices. But he had a number of them—and so had Shakespeare.

Take the trick of the woman disguised in man's apparel. It starts with Julia in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. It runs (and good reason why it should when we consider that all women's parts were acted by boys) right through the Comedies and into *Cymbeline*. Portia, Nerissa, Jessica (these three in one play), Rosalind, Viola, Imogen, each in turn masquerades thus, and in circumstances that, unless we take stage convention on its own terms, beggar credulity.

"The bridegroom may forget the bride Was made his wedded wife yestreen," but not in the sense that Bassanio and Gratiano forget. Is it credible that Bassanio shall catch no accent, no vibration, to touch, awaken, thrill his memory during all that long scene in the Doge's court, or afterwards when challenged to part with his ring? Translated into actual life, is it even conceivable?

Let us take another device: that of working the plot upon a shipwreck, shown or reported. (There is perhaps no better way of starting romantic adventures, misadventures, meetings, recognitions, as none to strip men more dramatically of all trappings that cover their native nobility or baseness.) *The Comedy of Errors* and *Pericles* are pivoted on shipwreck; by shipwreck Perdita in *The Winter's Tale* is abandoned on the magical seacoast of Bohemia. *Twelfth Night* takes its intrigue from shipwreck and, for acting purposes, opens with Viola's casting ashore:—

VIOLA. What country, friends, is this?

CAPTAIN. This is Illyria, lady.

VIOLA. And what should I do in Illyria?

My brother he is in Elysium.
Perchance he is not drown'd
—what think you, sailors?

CAPTAIN. It is perchance that you yourself were saved.

The Tempest opens in the midst of shipwreck. In *The Comedy of Errors*, and in *Twelfth Night*, shipwreck leads on to another trick—that of mistaken identity, as it is called; in *The Comedy of Errors* (again) and *Pericles* to the trick of a long-lost mother, supposed to have perished in shipwreck, revealed as living yet and loving. From shipwreck the fairy Prince lands to learn toll and through it to find his love, the delicate Princess to wear homespun and find her lover.

One might make a long list of these favorite themes; from Shakespeare's favorite one of the jealous husband or lover and the woman foully misjudged (Hero, Desdemona, Hermione) to the trick of the potion which arrests life without slaying it (Juliet, Imogen), or the trick of the commanded murderer whose heart softens (Hubert, Leonine, Pisanio). But perhaps enough has been said to suggest an enquiry by which any reader may assure himself that Shakespeare, having once employed a stage device with some degree of success, had never the smallest scruple about using it again. Rather, I suppose, that there was never a great author who repeated himself at once so lavishly and so economically, still husbanding his favorite themes, while ever attempting new variations upon them. In the very wealth of this variation we find "God's plenty," of course. But so far as I dare to understand Shakespeare, I see him as a magnificently indolent man, not agonizing to invent new plots, taking old ones as clay to his hands, breathing life into that clay, anon unmaking, remoulding, reinspiring it. We know for a fact that he worked upon old plays, old chronicles, other men's romances. We

know, too, that men of his time made small account of what we call plagiarism and even now define as a misdemeanor quite loosely and almost capriciously.¹ Shakespeare, who borrowed other men's inventions so royally, delighted in repeating and improving his own.

Now it has been pretty well established by scholars that the earlier comedies of Shakespeare run in the following chronological order:—*Love's Labor's Lost*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. It may, indeed, be argued that *The Comedy of Errors* came before *Love's Labor's Lost*; but whether it did or 'did not matters very little to us; so let us take the four in the order generally assigned by conjecture.

In the 1598 Quarto of *Love's Labor's Lost* we are informed that it was presented before her Highness this last Christmas, and is now "newly corrected and augmented by W. Shakespeare." It was a Court play, then, and indeed it bears every mark of one. It is an imitative performance, after the fashionable model of John Lyly; but it imitates with a high sense of humor and burlesques its model audaciously.

All young artists in drama are preoccupied with plot, or "construction": character comes later. The plot of *Love's Labor's Lost* turns on "confusion of identity," the Princess and her ladies masking themselves to the perplexity of their masked lovers. For the rest, in its whole conception as in its diction, the thing is consciously artificial and extravagant from first to last.

The Comedy of Errors is an experi-

¹ For instance any poet or dramatist may take the story of Tristram and Iseult and make what he can of it; whereas if I use (which God forbid) a plot of Mr. Hall Caine's or of Mrs. Humphry Ward's, I am a branded thief. The reader will find an amusing attempt to delimit the offence of plagiarism in an appendix to Charles Reade's novel, "The Wandering Heir."

ment on a different model; not Lyly now, but Plautus, and Plautus to be out-Plautussed. Again we have confusion of identity for the motive; but here confusion of identity does not merely turn the plot, as in *Love's Labor's Lost*: it means all the play, and the play means nothing else. Where Plautus had one pair of twin-brothers so featured that they cannot be told apart, Shakespeare adds another pair, and the fun is drawn out with amazing dexterity. Let three things, however, be observed. (1) The feat is achieved at a total sacrifice of character—and indeed he who starts out to confuse identity must, consciously or not, set himself the task of obliterating character. (2) Unless a convention of pasteboard be accepted as substitute for flesh and blood, the events are incredible. (3) On the stage of Plautus the convention of two men being like enough in feature to deceive even their wives might pass. It was *actually* a convention of pasteboard, since the players wore masks. Paint two masks alike, and (since masks muffle voices) the trick is done. But (4) Shakespeare, dispensing with the masks, doubled the confusion by tacking a pair of Dromios on to a pair of Antipholuses; and to double one situation so improbable is to multiply its improbability by the hundred.

It is all done, to be sure, with such amazing resource that, were ingenuity of stage-craft the test of great drama, we might say, "Here is a man who has little or nothing to learn." But ingenuity of stage-craft is not the test of great drama: and, in fact, Shakespeare had much more than a vast deal to learn. He had a vast deal to unlearn.

A dramatic author must start by mastering certain stage-mechanics. Having mastered them, he must—to be great—unlearn reliance on them, learn

to cut them away as he grows to perceive that the secret of his art resides in playing human being against human being, man against woman, character against character, will against will—not in devising "situations" or "curtains," and operating on puppets to produce these. His art touches climax when his "situations" and "curtains" astound, yet are visibly, rationally, necessarily brought about by the men and women he has conjured on to his stage; so that we tell ourselves: "It is wonderful—yet what else could have happened?" *Othello* is one of the cleverest stage-plays ever written. What does it leave to us to say but—in an awe of pity—"It is most terrible, but it must have happened so"? In great art, as in life, character makes the bed it lies on, or dies on.

So in the next play, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, we find Shakespeare learning and, perhaps even more deliberately, unlearning. *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* is not a great play; but it is a curious one, and a very wardrobe of "effects," in which Shakespeare afterwards dressed himself to better advantage.

In *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* Shakespeare is feeling for character, for real men and women. Tricks no longer satisfy him, but the old tricks haunt him. He must have again, as in *The Comedy of Errors*, two gentlemen with a servant apiece—though the opposition is discriminated and more cunningly weighted. For stage effect, Proteus (supposed a friend and a gentleman) must suddenly behave with incredible baseness. For stage effect, Valentine must surrender his true love to his false friend with a mawkish generosity that deserves nothing so much as kicking—

"All that was mine in Silvia I give thee."

And what about Silvia? Where does

Silvia come in? That devastating sentence may help the curtain, but it blows all character to the winds. There are now no gentlemen in Verona.

We come now to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and, with the three earlier comedies to guide us, will attempt to conjecture how the young playwright would face this new piece of work.

First we will ask. What had he to do?

Nobody knows precisely when, or precisely where, or precisely how *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was first produced. But it is evident to me that, like *Love's Labor's Lost* and *The Tempest*, it was written for performance at Court, and that its particular occasion, like the occasion of *The Tempest*, was a Court wedding. It has all the stigmata of a Court play. Like *Love's Labor's Lost* and *The Tempest*, it contains an interlude, and that interlude—Bully Bottom's *Pyramus and Thisbe*—is designed, rehearsed, enacted for a wedding. Can anyone read the opening scene or the closing speech of Theseus and doubt that the occasion was a wedding? Be it remembered, moreover, how the fairies dominate this play, how constantly and intimately fairies are associated with weddings in Elizabethan poetry, their genial favors invoked, the malign caprices prayed against. I take a stanza from Spenser's great *Epithalamion*—

"Let no deluding dreams, nor dreadful sights

Make sudden sad affrights;

Ne let house-fyres, nor lightnings hel-
lesse harmes,

Ne let the Pooke nor other evil
sprights,

Ne let mischievous witches, with their
charmes,

Ne let hob-Goblins, names whose sense
we see not,

Fray us with things that be not.

Let not the shriek Oule nor the Stork
be heard,
Nor the night Raven that still deadly
yels,
Nor damned ghosts cald up with
mighty spells,
Nor griesly Vultures, make us once
afeard,
Ne let the unpleasant Queen of Frogs
still croaking
Make us to wish their choking.
Let none of these theyr dreary accents
sing;
Ne let the woods them answer, nor
theyr eccho ring."

and I compare this with the fairies'
last pattering ditty in our play—

"Now the wasted brands do glow,
Whilst the screech-owl, screeching
loud,

Puts the wretch that lies on woe

In remembrance of a shroud,

Now it is the time of night

That the graves, all gaping wide,

Everyone lets forth his sprite

In the churchway paths do glide:

And we Fairies, that do run

By the triple Hecate's team,

From the presence of the Sun

Following darkness like a dream,

Now are frolic: not a mouse

Shall disturb this hallowed house;

I am sent with broom before

To sweep the dust behind the door.

"To the best bride-bed will we,
Which by us shall blessed be. . . .

"And each several chamber bless,
Through the palace, with sweet peace."

Can anyone set these two passages together and doubt A *Midsummer Night's Dream* to be intended for a merry *katharsis*, a pretty purgation of those same goblin terrors which Spenser would exorcise from the bridal chamber? For my part, I make little doubt that Shakespeare had Spenser's very words in mind as he wrote.

Here, then, we have a young playwright commissioned to write a wedding play, a play to be presented at

Court. He is naturally anxious to shine, and, moreover, though his fellow-playwrights already pay him the compliment of being a little jealous, he still has his spurs to win.

As I read the play and seek to divine its process of construction, I seem—and the reader must take this for what it is worth—to see Shakespeare's mind working somewhat as follows:—

He turns over his repertory of notions, and takes stock. "Lyly's model has had its day, and the bloom is off it; I must not repeat the experiment of *Love's Labor's Lost*. . . . I have shown that I can do great things with *Mistaken Identity*; but I cannot possibly express the fun of that further than I did in *The Comedy of Errors*; and the fun there was clever, but a trifle hard, if not inhuman. . . . But here is a wedding; a wedding should be human; a wedding calls for poetry; and I long to fill a play with poetry. (For I can write poetry. Look at *Venus and Adonis*!) . . . Still, *Mistaken Identity* is a trick I know, a trick in which I am known to shine. . . . If I could only make it poetical. A pair of lovers? For *Mistaken Identity* that means two pairs of lovers. . . . Yet, steady! We must not make it farcical. It was all very well to make wives mistake their husbands. That has been funny ever since the world began; that is as ancient as cuckoldy, or almost. But this is a wedding play, and the sentiment must be fresh. Lovers are not so easily mistaken as wives and husbands—or ought not to be—in poetry.

"I like too"—we see the young dramatist continuing—"that situation of the scorned lady following her sweetheart. . . . I did not quite bring it off in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*; but it is none the less a good situation, and I must use it again³

³ And he did; not only here, but in "All's Well that Ends Well," for instance.

. . . Lovers mistaking one another . . . scorned lady following the scorner . . . wandering through a wood (that is poetical, anyhow). . . Yes, and by night: this play has to be written for a bridal eve. . . A night for lovers—a summer's night—a midsummer's night—dewy thickets—the moon. . . The moon? Why, of course, the moon. Pitch darkness is for tragedy, moonlight for softer illusion. Lovers can be pardonably mistaken—under the moon. . . What besides happens on a summer's night, in a woodland, under the moon?

"Eh? . . . Oh, by Heaven, fairies! Real Warwickshire fairies! Fairies full of mischief—Robin Goodfellow and the rest—don't I know about *them*? Fairies full of mischief, and for a wedding, too! How does that verse of Spenser's go?"

"'Ne let the Pooke—"

"Fairies, artificers, and ministers of all illusion . . . the fairy ointment, philtres, pranks, 'the little western flower'—

"'Before milk-white, now purple with Love's wound;

And maidens call it Love-in-Idleness.' These and wandering lovers, a mistress scorned—why, we scarcely need the moon, after all!"

Then—for the man's fancy never started to work but it straightway teemed—we can watch it opening out new alleys of funs, weaving fresh delicacies upon this central invention. "How, for a tangle, to get one of the fairies caught in the web they spin? Why not even the fairy-queen herself? . . . Yes, but the mortal she falls in with? Shall he be one of the lovers? . . . Well, to say truth, I haven't yet given any particular character to these lovers. The absolute jest would be to bring opposite extremes into the allusion, to make Queen Mab dote on a gross clown. . . All very well, but I haven't any clowns. . . The an-

swer to that seems simple: if I haven't I ought to have. . . Stay! I have been forgetting the interlude all this while. We must have an interlude; our interlude in *Love's Labor's Lost* proved the making of the play. . . Now suppose we make a set of clowns perform the interlude, as in *Love's Labor's Lost*, and get them chased by the fairies while they are rehearsing? Gross flesh and gossamer—that's an idea! If I cannot use it now, I certainly will some day." . . . But I can use it now! What is that story in Ovid about Midas and the ass's ears? Or am I confusing it with another story—which I read the other day in that book about witches—of a man transformed into an ass?"

Enough! I am not, of course, suggesting that Shakespeare constructed *A Midsummer Night's Dream* just in this way. (As the provincial Mayor said to the Eminent Statesman, "Aha, sir! that's more than you or me knows. That's *Latin*!") But I do suggest that we can immensely increase our delight in Shakespeare and strengthen our understanding of him if, as we read him again and again, we keep asking ourselves *how the thing was done*. I am sure that—hopeless as complete success must be—by this method we get far nearer to the *τό τί ἦν εἶναι* of a given play than by searching among "sources" and "origins," by debating how much Shakespeare took from Chaucer's *Knight's Tale*, or how much he borrowed from Golding's Ovid, or how much Latin he learned at Stratford Grammar School, or how far he anticipated modern scientific discoveries, or *why* he gave the names "Pease-blossom," "Cobweb," "Moth," "Mustard-Seed" to his fairies. I admit the idle fascination of some of these studies. A friend of mine—an old squire of Devon—used to demon-

³ And he did (see the last Act of "The Merry Wives of Windsor").

strate to me at great length that when Shakespeare wrote, in this play, of the moon looking "with a watery eye"—

"And, when she weeps, weeps every little flower
Lamenting some enforced chastity"—

he anticipated our modern knowledge of plant-fertilization. Good man, he took "enforced" to mean "compulsory," and I never dared to dash his enthusiasm by hinting that, as Shakespeare would use the word "enforced," an "enforced chastity" meant a chastity violated.

Let us note three or four things that promptly follow upon Shakespeare's discovering the fairies and pressing them into the service of this play.

(1) To begin with, poetry follows. The springs of it in the author's *Venus and Adonis* are released, and for the first time he is able to pour it into drama.

"And never, since the middle summer's spring,
Met we on hill, in dale, forest or mead,
By paved fountain, or by rushy brook,
Or in the brackèd margent of the sea
To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind. . . .

"I know a bank whereon the wild
thyme blows,
Where oxlips, and the nodding violet
grows
Quite over-canopied with lush wood-
bine,
With sweet musk-roses, and with eg-
lantine:
There sleeps Titania sometime of the
night,
Lull'd in these flowers.

"The honey-bags steal from the humble-
bees,
And for night-tapers crop their waxen
thighs
And light them at the fiery glow-worm's
eyes
To have my love to bed, and to arise:

And pluck the wings from painted but-
terflies
To fan the moonbeams from his sleep-
ing eyes.

"Never so weary, never so in woe,
Bedabbled with the dew and torn with
briers.*

"Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of
Egypt.

" . . . Gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name.

"Following darkness like a dream."
The overstrained wit of *Love's Labor's Lost*, the hard gymnastic wit of *The Comedy of Errors*, allowed no chance for this sort of writing. But the plot of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* invites poetry, and poetry suffuses the play, as with portable moonlight.

(2) The logic-chopping wit of *Love's Labor's Lost* had almost excluded humor. Hard, dry wit had cased *The Comedy of Errors* against it. With Lance in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* we have an incidental, tentative experiment in humor; but Lance is no part of the plot. Now, with Bottom and his men, we have humor let loose in a flood. In the last act it ripples and dances over the other flood of poetry, until demurely hushed by the elves. Now the two greatest gifts of Shakespeare were poetry and humor; and in this play he first, and simultaneously, found scope for them.

(3) As I see it, this invention of the fairies—this trust in an imaginative world which he understands—suddenly in this play eases and dissolves four-fifths of the difficulties Shakespeare has been finding with his plots. I remember reading, some years ago, a critique by Mr. Max Beerbohm on a performance of this play, and I wish I could remember his exact words, for

* Echoed from *Venus and Adonis*—
The bushes in the way
Some catch her by the neck, some kiss her face,
Some twine about her thigh to make her stay.

his words are always worth exact quotation. But he said in effect: "Here we have the master, confident in his art, at ease with it as a man in his dressing-gown, kicking up a loose slipper and catching it on his toe." A *Midsummer Night's Dream* is the first play of Shakespeare's to show a really careless grace—the best grace of the Graces. By taking fairyland for granted, he comes into his inheritance; by assuming that we take it for granted, he achieves just that easy probability he missed in several plays before trusting his imagination and ours.

(4) Lastly, let the reader note how the fairy business and the business of the clowns take charge of the play as it proceeds, in proportion as both of them are more real—that is, more really imagined—than the business of Lysander and Hermia, Demetrius and Helena. The play has three plots interwoven: (a) the main sentimental plot of the four Athenian lovers, (b) the fairy plot which complicates (a) and (c), the grotesque plot which complicates (b). Now when we think of the play, the main plot (a) comes last in our minds; for in (b) and (c) Shakespeare has found himself.

I once discussed with a friend how, if given our will, we would have A *Midsummer Night's Dream* presented. We agreed at length on this:—

The set scene should represent a large Elizabethan hall, panelled, having a lofty oak-timbered roof and an enormous staircase. The cavity under

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the staircase, occupying in breadth two-thirds of the stage, should be fronted with folding or sliding doors, which, being opened, should reveal the wood, recessed, moonlit, with its trees upon a flat arras or tapestry. On this secondary remoter stage the lovers should wander through their adventures, the fairies now conspiring in the quiet hall under the lantern, anon withdrawing into the woodland to be-fool the mortals straying there. Then for the last scene and the interlude of Pyramus and Thisbe, the hall should be filled with lights and company. That over, the bridal couples go up the great staircase. Last of all, and after a long pause, when the house is quiet, the lantern all but extinguished, the hall looking vast and eerie, lit only by a last flicker from the hearth, the fairies, announced by Puck, should come tripping back, swarming forth from cupboards and down curtains, somersaulting downstairs, sliding down the baluster rails: all hushed as they fall to work with their brooms—hushed, save for one little voice and a thin, small chorus scarcely more audible than the last dropping embers—

"Through the house give glimmering light

By the dead and drowsy fire;
Every elf and every sprite
Hop as light as bird from brier. . . .
Hand in hand with fairy grace
Will we sing and bless this place.

"Trip away,
Make no stay.
Meet we all by break of day."

Arthur Quiller-Couch.

AT THE SIGN OF THE GRAY OWL.

Emphatically a modern battlefield is neither a beautiful nor an inspiring sight—when the battle is over; and Private Jean Pulchot realized as much as he staggered out of the trench over

which the attacking masses had swept, walked a dozen aimless paces, and collapsed again.

A month before, the place had been a wheatfield, brown stubble under

placid September skies. Since then it had been ploughed afresh. The gathering twilight hid much, but there was a horrible suggestiveness in every dark blotch that broke the horizon.

Pulchot had been in the trenches for thirty-six hours, he and a couple of hundred others, watching the tide of battle ebb and flow. He had the vaguest ideas as to what had actually happened. He knew that he had loaded and fired his rifle almost as mechanically as the barking little Maxims worked, which the British had brought up on his left; that the enemy had been beaten back again and again, and had still come on; and then——

There followed a gap in his impressions, and he had come to his senses to find himself alone, under a darkening sky, with only dead men and horses for company. He had no conception as to the whereabouts of his regiment. He did not even know if it still existed. In the distance the lights of a village twinkled; they looked home-like and friendly. He reeled to his feet again, and began a slouching trot toward them.

The distance was nearly a mile, and neither then nor at any time did he understand how he accomplished the journey. More than once it seemed to him that the lights could be no more than a will-o'-the-wisp of his own fevered brain; but presently he passed through a gate into a street, and felt cobbles beneath his feet. The lights suddenly confronted him, swooped upward in an enormous curve that reached the zenith, and were lost in black oblivion. In a word, he fainted for the second time.

He regained his senses on a stiff horsehair couch. Over him a girl was bending—a full-lipped, dark-eyed brunette.

"You are better?" she asked.

Pulchot nodded. His mouth still tin-

gled with the sting of the neat spirit she had given him.

"That is good. *Ma foi!* but you terrified me mightily when you fell into my doorway."

With an effort he sat up, and realized that he was in a small parlor opening out of the public room of an inn. "What place is this *ma'mselle?*"

"The village of Frontillac, *m'sieu*. This is 'The Gray Owl,' and I am the niece of Jules Dutil, to whom it belongs. I have done my poor best to keep the business alive since he went to the war, but it has been melancholy and profitless work."

"You are French?" he asked. The fighting had been near enough to the frontier to make it uncertain.

"Belgian, *m'sieu*." She spoke with sudden passion. "If you or the English had come to our help sooner——"

"We did our best," said Pulchot mechanically. He passed his hand over his forehead. It was caked with clay and dried blood. "If there is any place where one might wash"——

She pointed to the door that led to the scullery. There was a pump there, with its spout over a big stone sink, and a basin already filled. The ice-cold water cleared his brain. When he went back he found bread, cheese, and a bottle of wine on the table.

"Eat and drink," said the girl brusquely. "Then, if you wish, you may go in search of your regiment."

Pulchot, who was starving, sat down obediently. "What has happened?" he asked.

The girl dropped into a chair opposite. Her vivid beauty smote his senses like a blow. "What happened? Your men were outnumbered, overwhelmed, annihilated. The Uhlans—brute beasts that they are!—slew and slew. They lost very many themselves. Perhaps for that reason they killed the wounded where they found them. I heard it from one of their men who

passed through the village afterwards. If you should be found here"—

"I will go at once," said Pulchot. He was not thinking of himself, but of the probable consequences to the girl. He rose unsteadily to his feet.

Misunderstanding him, she smiled with contemptuous pity. "You are fit for nothing but bed, m'sieu. There is a barn at the back which may serve." She took up the lamp. "Come!"

He followed her across a paved yard to an outhouse. She flung back the door for him to go in, and held the lamp high. The place was clean and dry, the straw a scented invitation to slumber.

"*B'n soir, m'sieu!*" she said, and left him to undress by the little light that filtered through the cobwebbed window.

He fell asleep almost instantly, to waken a couple of hours later with a raging thirst and fever. He stumbled dizzily out into the moonlight. The door of the scullery was fastened on the inner side, and he was still fumbling with the handle when the window of a room above swung back.

The girl looked down. "Are you dreaming of the Germans, m'sieu?"

"I am thirsty. I could not sleep."

"Wait!" she commanded.

A bolt shot back, and she appeared, ghostlike, in a long white wrap, her hair lying in a thick plait over her shoulder. "Of all the guests I ever entertained"—she grumbled. Then, after a glance at his face, "Go back to your bed, and I will bring the water."

She brought it. He drank gratefully, slept for a time, and awoke again in the clutch of semi-delirium to find her still near. She was there again when dawn broke; and Pulchot, weak, but with the fever abated, made an effort to sit up.

"You are better," she said, cutting short his thanks; "but, Germans or no Germans, you cannot leave. Even an unprofitable customer must be catered

for, and I have little else to do."

So throughout that day and the next he remained. A strained tendon made walking difficult, but he saw enough of the village to realize that it was practically deserted.

On the third morning the girl came to him soon after daybreak. The rattle of distant rifle-fire had already aroused him. She carried a bundle of clothing.

"M'sieu, you will surrender your uniform, and at once."

"Why?" he demanded.

"Old Lisette, who knits lace, tells me that the Uhlans have already been seen. These clothes belonged to my uncle. You must wear them, and take his place. You understand?"

Whether he understood or not made little difference, for she had gone away with his uniform before he could reply. Pulchot put on the garments she had left, and followed her into the parlor.

She turned from her coffee-making to regard him critically. "*Bien!*" they fit well! It is fortunate that you and my uncle are of much the same figure. Not," she added impartially, "that you have my uncle's intelligence."

Pulchot flushed dully. "Ma'mselle has been an angel of mercy, all that a woman could be. But always there has been a—a hostility"—

"Hostility!" she flashed, with sudden passion. "And why? Because we were told that your army, and the English, were to be the saviours of our country. My father and brother had a factory near Mons, m'sieu; and because they showed hospitality to a party of the Allies they were tortured and then shot. Your armies fell back—back—leaving our land devastated. Many explanations have been made; but a woman—a simple woman—judges from what she sees. Do you wonder that I have no love for your people?"

"I think," said Pulchot, half to him-

self, "that you have never yet loved any one, ma'mselle."

"It has never been worth while. My man would have to be *un beau saïre*, very tender, very brave, and a hundred other things! When I meet him I will perhaps give him my heart. Until then— Your coffee grows cold, m'sieu!"

It was their only approach to anything like intimacy. But the fact did not prevent Jean Pulchot falling very swiftly and effectively in love with her. For a day or so longer they waited, always on the *qui vive* for the Uhlans; and then an afternoon came when the half-witted lacemaker fled past the door with the news that they were on their way from the next village. Already the distant hoof-beats could be heard.

"What are your plans?" asked the girl, as Pulchot limped toward the front-door.

"Upon such occasions as this," said Pulchot seriously, "one's nerves require a sedative. Père Bompard, three doors lower down, sells drugs, I believe?"

"Inquire for yourself," said Lucille, and turned her back upon him, her eyes hot with contempt and anger.

He slipped away, but three minutes later was back again. "The good Bompard was hiding in his cellar; consequently I was left to compound my own prescription." His tone changed. "As for you, ma'mselle, you will oblige me by retiring to the kitchen, and there proceeding to make your face dirty and your hair untidy—in effect, transforming yourself into the least attractive woman in northern France, if that be possible."

"This is no time for compliments, even of the clumsiest," she flashed. Nevertheless, she went. And afterwards her obedience seemed to her the most remarkable thing of that remarkable day.

The Uhlans—a lieutenant and half-

a-dozen men—approached. The lieutenant rapped with his sword-hilt against the door, and then, without waiting for an answer, flung himself into the room. Pulchot, equipped with a large white apron, had taken his place behind the counter, and was polishing glasses.

"Here," said the German, "give us wine—the best you have."

"I am sorry, Excellency; but there is so little left"—

"We've heard that tale before. If you're afraid to fetch the stuff, call your pig of a wife. I am thirsty."

"We are poor folk. You will pay us?"

"Of a certainty. The Emperor will call in one of his Zeppelins with the money to-morrow! Quick, fool!"

Pulchot, fumbling among the bottles behind him, uncorked and proffered one. The lieutenant filled a glass, swallowed a mouthful, and flung the remainder in his face.

"When will offal of your type understand that when a gentleman calls for wine he does not desire vinegar? What have you in the cellars?"

"Very little, Excellency," said Pulchot, spluttering.

"Go and fetch it. And we will follow. Those who fly down into cellars have a trick of disappearing altogether.—Sergeant!"

One of the men came forward.

"See first if this animal has weapons."

"Up with your hands!" said the sergeant. He jerked Pulchot's hands upward, and sent a row of glasses to the floor.

"He is unarmed, Excellency."

"Good! Let him march."

Pulchot shuffled off in the direction of the scullery, where Lucille was clattering aimlessly among the saucepans.

"Wife!"

She started, and turned towards him with a crimsoned face.

"These gentlemen desire wine."

"I—I will fetch some at once, *mes-sieurs*," she said, and went down the steps which led to the little white-washed cellar. The officer turned to the sergeant again.

"Johan!"

"Herr lieutenant?"

"I am tired of shepherding these animals. They are slow-witted and slow-moving, and they may, after all, be deceiving us. Knock the one left behind here three times on the head for every minute which passes before his scarecrow of a wife returns."

The sergeant, with a grin, dealt Pulchot three blows which sent him staggering.

"Lucille!" Pulchot's voice shook with pain and fear.

She appeared in the doorway, laden.

"Bring them back to the parlor," commanded the lieutenant. He followed at the rear of the party, and watched while the girl uncorked the first bottle. "This is better. And the scarecrow is less repulsive than I had imagined. Her grime hides something of her beauty." He leered at her over the wine. "Give me a kiss, scarecrow, and I will risk the dirt."

"I—I would sooner give you another bottle of wine, *m'sieu*."

"Except that of *La Somna brand*," intervened Pulchot, in an anxious whisper.

The lieutenant overheard, and set down his glass, scowling. "What is that?"

"Nothing, Excellency; nothing!"

"Nothing? When you have a still better wine which you have not produced!"

"There are but six bottles, Excellency. It is of a vintage for the connoisseur's palate only."

"That shall be proved. Let the girl go. No; she shall remain as a hostage. And you"—the lieutenant drew his sabre—"would be wise to hasten."

Pulchot moved away. The eyes of the girl followed him. There was bewilderment, and shame, and contempt in their depths.

A moment later, and Pulchot stumbled back into the room again, the bottles in his arms.

"Excellency, these are all I have. I would implore you"—

"Open them, dolt. And you"—he indicated the other men with a magniloquent wave of his hand—"may help yourselves."

Pulchot knocked off the neck of a bottle, received a blow for his clumsiness, and was ordered to bring and fill fresh glasses. He obeyed. The girl watched him secretly, but would not meet his eyes.

"*Himmel*," said the lieutenant, drinking, "but this is rousing stuff!" He smashed open a second bottle, and then a third.

"Excellency, I am ruined!" moaned Pulchot.

"Swine such as you are lucky to escape slaughter. We will sing, and the pair of you shall dance to our singing. Listen." He bellowed the chorus of a taproom song. "Sing, wench, sing, or"—The lieutenant staggered toward the girl, gripping his sabre.

She gave a choked cry of terror, and shrank back. Pulchot stood motionless until the man was a couple of feet away, watching him with keen, critical eyes. Then he dealt a sudden, swinging blow which caught the protruding chin fairly. The lieutenant went down with a crash which set the glasses jangling, and lay still.

The sergeant made a movement to rise, but dropped back heavily in his seat. None of the other men stirred; their breathing had become heavy, their eyes dull and fishlike. One by one they slid forward in ungainly heaps.

The girl stood as though frozen.

"What—what does it mean?"

"The wine was drugged," said Pulchot. "I got the stuff—it's laudanum chiefly—from Père Bompard's."

"Will they—will they die?"

He shook his head. "I am no poisoner, ma'mselle. They should come to their fuddled senses in a few hours. Before then"—he eyed her with a faint smile—"one could travel some considerable distance, especially if one had a vehicle."

She understood. "I will harness the mare at once, m'sieu. And later, when I am able, I will try to thank you."

Dusk fell, and found the two of them plodding along a road that stretched, an interminable gray ribbon, between a succession of wind-swept poplars and over many hills. They had taken what Pulchot conceived to be the direction of the Allies' lines; but their chief anxiety was to avoid any chance patrol of Uhlans. Once they took refuge in a spinney, hearing hoof-beats that soon died away; and later they were
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compelled to make a long detour because of a swollen stream, a sinister freshet in which the bodies of men and beasts floated darkly.

Night had enwrapped them when a sudden "*Halte!*" broke the silence. Pulchot climbed down from the cart, but in a moment returned.

"Be thankful, ma'mselle. It is a French outpost. They will care for us both until to-morrow."

"And afterwards our roads will lie apart."

"Must they?" he asked in an unsteady voice.

"We—we have known one another so short a time, m'sieu."

"A lifetime, an eternity, ma'mselle! You are Belgian; I am French. Everything in the world may divide us; but I love you. If I go back to the wars and fight—I, who am no *beau sabre*, but whose very soul is yours—will you wait for me?"

"Yes," she whispered, and with brimming eyes lifted her lips to his.

William Freeman.

CHATHAM 1914.

BY A SAILOR'S WIFE.

I.—BEFORE THE WAR.

An ugly place is Chatham, with scarcely an outstanding feature, save its Town Hall, to break the squalid monotony of its streets. On the west it immediately adjoins Rochester, its far more dignified neighbor, one High Street merging imperceptibly into the other. Eastward lies Gillingham, a modern town of small, new houses, useful and undistinguished, which shelter the families of thousands of sailors and dockyard men; but a broad stretch of rough grass, known as the Lines, separates its row upon row of red brick and stucco from Chatham, and forms a valuable air-space and playground, burnt up and dusty, or

swept by wind and rain (and always paper-haunted), for the dwellers on both sides of it.

There are four sets of barracks in Chatham: one for the Royal Engineers, one for the Line regiment, one for the Navy, and one for the Royal Marine Light Infantry; and, most important of all, its "Establishments"—its *raison d'être*, in fact—His Majesty's Dockyard. Upon all these centres of activity the great and admirably-planned Naval Hospital looks down from the far side of the Lines, magnificent in its spaciousness, and enclosing lawns and flower-beds of a vigorous gaiety astounding and unaccountable, where distracted gardeners, poor

soil, and extreme exposure to every wind that blows might be expected to furnish only borders of the hardier weeds, edged with storm-proof oyster-shells.

Behind high blank walls the Dockyard spreads itself along a muddy estuary, and on five days of the week the clang and whir and thud of the machinery behind those walls make the neighborhood trying to all but the incurably deaf. At certain hours the hands, pallid and grimy, pour in or out through its gates in such crowds as block traffic and embarrass the average wayfarer by presenting front, rear, and flanks all equally impervious to his passage. Strings of tram-cars await the outward-bound tide at the gates, swallowing all they can contain and moving heavily away, and hundreds of bicycling mateys, regardless of its rules, add to the perils of the

road. If one should be lucky enough to find oneself in the neighborhood of the Naval Barracks when the Dockyard empties itself into the town, it were wise to seek shelter within its gates and so escape the enveloping hordes which deviate not one hair's-breadth from their route for man, woman, or child; no, nor would they for an angel with a flaming sword if he tried to bar the way.

Inside the Barracks' grounds one can pause to draw breath and inhale the sweetness of its well-protected rose-garden, lingering perhaps to read the inscription on the monument erected close by to the memory of French prisoners of war who died during their detention on St. Mary's Island more than a hundred years ago—an inscription which, for simplicity and good feeling and style, could hardly be bettered.

Here are gathered together

The remains of many brave soldiers and sailors

Who, having once been the foes, afterwards the captives, of England,

Now find rest in her soil,

Remembering no more the animosities of war or the sorrows of imprisonment.

They were deprived of the consolation of closing their eyes amongst the countrymen they loved,

But they have been laid in an honorable grave

By a nation which knows how to respect valor and sympathize with misfortune.¹

It is surprisingly easy to lose one's way in Chatham Dockyard, and as its various roads and passages, penitentially cobble-stoned, are unnamed, it takes a stupid person some time to learn its geography. Alluring notice-boards, white, with clear black lettering, attract the stupid person, but as they only bear the cryptic words, "Whistle and go slow," they are not really illuminating. Still there are policemen to be met with—members of the Metropolitan Force, than whom

none are more helpful and indulgent towards an obviously pacific female—and, directed by one of them, the wanderer in search of an exit proceeds westward between piles of well-seasoned timber—oak, teak, and pine—each balk inscribed with its name and grade; past the prim little Georgian houses inhabited by Dockyard officials and known, unofficially, as Harmony Row; past old Admiralty House—there is a big new one now looking on to the Lines—with its dignified Adam ceilings and chimney-pieces and its shady, terraced garden; and finally out through the turreted red-brick main

¹In the "Spectator" of February 27 a correspondent quotes this epitaph, but it was incorporated in this article before that date.

gate, bearing the Royal Arms in red and gold over its central archway, into the dreary, colorless town. The barrow-loads of fruit and flowering plants have departed with the departure of the mateys who patronize them, but there is life still, since, scorching along on rickety, hireling bicycles, come four midshipmen off for week-end leave. Just outside the gate the last of the quartet hastily dismounts. It is a case of a bad puncture, and while the poor boy is still bending over his azure-painted crock the others have passed out of sight. But midshipmen are past-masters in resource and expedient, and it would not be surprising to hear that the boy has borrowed a bicycle from the police sergeant (or the Admiral Superintendent himself) and sped upon his way, before the uselessly sympathetic spectator of his breakdown had traversed half a mile of her homeward road.

II.—DURING THE WAR.

Chatham is a very different place now. Its ugliness is forgotten, and its intense vitality, threaded through with heart-rending reminders of grief and loss, is its most salient feature. Night and day the Dockyard throbs with the beating of a thousand hammers. The white-faced mateys seem inspired as they go about their tasks of constructing, refitting, and repairing. Their energy and enthusiasm are every bit as fine and important as the valor and dogged resistance of their brothers at the Front or in the North Sea, amongst whom there are many Reservists, themselves Dockyard hands before the war called them away. The war has brought a brimming tide of prosperity to the mateys and their families, and they deserve it. "Over-time all the time" is the order of the day, and hundreds of recruits ("paying guests," in truth) are billeted in their homes on either side of the

Lines. They work with the unquenchable ardor which no money can buy. See them repairing the battered plates of the *Arethusa*—"saucy" indeed—and her destroyer-children after the Heligoland fight. Their hammers ring with as martial a note as any bugle, and in a space of time unparalleled for shortness the work is completed and the little gray ships again take the bleak road to the North Sea, as staunch as before and keener than ever; live things all of them, and restored to life by the spirit and skill of the very men who a month or two earlier so gladly left and so reluctantly re-entered the Dockyard gates.

The Town Hall at Chatham, which to most of us before the war merely marked the central junction for tramway traffic, is now the headquarters of relief work for soldiers' and sailors' families, and the Mayor and his staff have become the generous and long-suffering hosts of several ladies' committees. Members of these committees, with anxious or harassed faces, pass in and out; soldiers' and sailors' wives—many with babies in their arms and little children trailing behind them—penetrate to the committee-rooms to obtain pay and advice, or linger round the notice-boards at the doors. The ladies of the Friendly Union of Sailors' Wives register names and addresses by the thousand, give news of hospital patients, cut out useful garments and distribute mourning, and are always ready with consoling and cheering words and comforting cups of tea for the inquirers who drift in and out, nervous, restless, torn with doubts and fears as to the safety of their men. Thirteen days of racking suspense elapsed after the sinking of the three cruisers before full and authentic lists of the lost could be published, and every day of those thirteen days wives and mothers came down to look for

news, with faces growing hourly more lined and haggard, their eyes dimmer and more sunken from want of sleep and the gradual draining away of hope. "Brave" is no adequate word for them. Tears there were, but no hysterical ravings. A piteous dignity was theirs, that none who strove to comfort them will ever forget. A *Hogue* baby was born twenty-four hours after her father was drowned, but her mother refused to believe that all was not well, and on the twelfth day was down in her kitchen nursing the little creature and still contriving to smile when the official news that her husband was among the lost was brought to her, and she smiled no more. "He *is* such a grand swimmer," said a wife who could not think herself a widow, "and I know he would swim, if it was a hundred miles, to get home to me. Seven years married we've been and never a cross word. . . . Hush then, baby, or I'll tell your daddy."

Thousands of recruits are drilling on the Lines and in the barrack squares—recruits who learn their duties in as many days as they would have re-
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quired weeks before the war. It would be hard to beat those of the Royal Engineers for intelligence, physique, and zeal, and it is a delight to watch the drummer-boys (all sappers' sons) on the parade ground—heads up, shoulders back, martial to the tips of their toes, and proud to bursting point. Even the brand-new recruits, being marched into barracks from the railway station, *march*; and as they get their uniform piecemeal—here a military cap over mufti, there a khaki tunic over blue serge trousers and tennis shoes—each one turns, by a transformation almost as magically swift as Cinderella's, into a fighting man; lean, keen, alert, inspired.

Up at the Naval Hospital the flowers went on blooming till the frost cut them down; hundreds of beds awaited the wounded; surgeons and nurses were ready, and tons of "sick comforts" stacked wherever space could be found. But only a handful of wounded and injured came. They were a negligible quantity, since the casualty list for the Chatham Division was mainly a list of drowned.

I. M. P.

THE WAR-LOAN FORM.

"I wish," said Francesca, "you would come out of your armchair and help me to fill up this form."

"Forms," I said, "are the easiest things in the world. You've only got to—"

"Yes," she said, "I know all you're going to say about the wonderful simplicity of forms, but they don't strike me in that way. I've never yet seen a form that didn't paralyze me."

"Has this one paralyzed you?"

"Absolutely."

"That's serious," I said. "What's it all about?"

"I'm not sure. I think I did know once, but it's all gone from me now. I think—mind you, I'm not certain—but I think it's about the new War Loan."

"Oh," I said, "you're going to be a capitalist, are you?"

"Well, I'm going to invest some savings. We're all going to invest some savings. Muriel and Nina and Alice and Frederick. They've all given notice to

withdraw their money from the Post Office, and they're going to put it in the War Loan. Muriel and Nina want bonds, but Alice and Frederick have decided for vouchers. They don't know what vouchers are, but they're quite determined to have some or perish in the attempt. I'm doing mine through my bank."

"Bravo," I said; "that's the true spirit. How much are you going in for?"

"Do you think a hundred would do?"

"Certainly," I said. "A hundred would do if you've got a hundred."

"Yes," she said, "it's there. I've saved it out of the housekeeping money."

"That's thrift," I said. "You give me less to eat by so many joints of beef and dishes of buttered eggs and——"

"We're all in the same box, anyhow."

"Yes, but we don't all get the savings. You get those."

"Of course I do. Who else should?"

"All right," I said, "I won't press the matter. Really, I'm all for it."

"Come along, then," she said, "and tackle the form."

"Read it to me," I said. "When things are read to me they always sink in better."

"Put down your paper, then, and listen."

"Don't be too hard on me. Let me go on reading Mr. Belloc on the Russians. It's most comforting. Besides, I can always listen better when I'm reading a paper."

"It's no good," she said. "Put it down."

"Very well," I said. "I shall remember this. If a man isn't to be allowed to read his Belloc in peace and quiet I don't know what things are coming to."

"They're coming to business—hard and solid business. Now listen: To the Governor and Company of the

Bank of England, London'—that's a good beginning, isn't it?"

"Splendid," I said. "It simply couldn't be better. Here's a woman who has saved somebody else's money, and one of the results of her thrift is that she's to be allowed to write to the Governor and Company of the Bank of England, London."

"Are they real people?" she said.

"Real people! The Governor and Company—real people! Francesca, what do you mean?"

"Oh, I don't know. I had an idea all that sort of thing was done by machinery now."

"Don't be frivolous," I said. "If you were to meet the Governor of the Bank of England in Threadneedle Street and run a pin into him, he'd jolly soon show you whether he was machinery or not."

"I should never dream of doing such a thing. I've been much too well brought up. Still, it would be rather nice, too. A pin into the Governor of the Bank of England—but no, it's impossible."

"Don't dwell on it, Francesca, or it'll get the better of you. Go on reading from the form."

"Lend me your ears, then. 'Blank hereby request you to allot to blank a in brackets pound-mark blank comma say blank pounds of the above-mentioned Loan comma in terms of the Prospectus of the 21st June 1915 semi-colon and blank hereby engage——'"

"Stop, stop!" I cried, "for Heaven's sake, stop!"

"Why interrupt me?" she said. "I was just getting into my stride."

"Your stride's too much for me," I said.

"Oh, haven't you understood? I'm so sorry. I'll read it out again: 'Blank hereby request you——'"

"Stop it, I say."

"Oh, very well, then," she said. "I thought men could always understand

that sort of thing. That's what they're here for, isn't it?"

"Hand me the form," I said firmly. "It's as simple as A, B, C."

"Of course it is," she said, "when a financial genius gets hold of it. But I'm only a poor woman, and anything like a rule of three sum or a calculation of per cents always reduces me to pulp. Still, I should like to help just a little. I'll dip your pen in the ink—oh! what a naughty blot! Mop it up quick. The Governor and Company can't bear blots. 'Name of Applicant in full.' Down it goes: Francesca Carlyon. Doesn't it look grand? 'State Title if any.' You can say it was an oversight in the last Birthday Punch.

List. Why should they want to know that? Probably the Governor hasn't got a title himself if the truth were known. Anyhow, it's a mere blit of swank. There, you've done it. Clever man. How shall I deal with it now?"

"It only wants your signature."

"Well, let it want for an hour or two. I'm not going to humor it too much all at once."

"And then," I said, "you can take it to your Bank-manager with five pounds and the thing's done."

"Actually done!"

"Yes, for the moment."

"Oh," she said, "the moment's good enough for me."

R. C. Lehmann.

COTTON AND AMERICAN POLITICS.

When this war takes its place in history and comes to be reviewed by impartial critics of another generation, it may safely be prophesied that certain problems will bewilder our posterity as much as they bewilder us. I will give two examples which I would predict will be the special subject of inquiry. Men will ask why General Von Kluck suddenly changed his plans in front of Paris to the great advantage of his enemies and to the inevitable defeat of the original German plan. And they will also ask why England, having command of the sea, did not at once prevent the importation of cotton into Germany and so make the manufacture by the enemy of munitions adequate to the conduct of the campaign impossible.

What makes it necessary to ask this question now instead of waiting for future historians to ask it is the amazing fact that, after all that has been said by qualified experts of all kinds, this exportation of cotton to the enemy is still going on. It has been demon-

strated both in these columns and elsewhere that this important war material is still reaching Germany, and that with our knowledge and by our permission. As everyone acquainted with the subject of munition-making knows, such exportation is exactly the same thing as if we handed over so many guns or so many shells to the enemy. Why is this astonishing thing permitted?

There is only one answer possible—or, at least, only one answer that will bear printing, for it is never safe to assume that the pressure of great financial interests does not dangerously influence even the best of our politicians. That answer is that we suffer this thing that we may avoid possible offence to the United States of America.

I am not concerned at the moment to discuss whether such a reason would in any case be adequate to justify us in placing ourselves at so definite a military disadvantage. For it is my object to show that the policy we have

pursued and are pursuing has no tendency at all to achieve the result contemplated, but rather to achieve the precise opposite; while there exists an alternative policy which *would* probably achieve that result and at the same time enable us to take effective action against our enemies.

The Americans, proud of their independence as they have a good right to be, justly resent any interference by foreigners in their domestic concerns. The rulers of Prussia and their agents have burnt their fingers very badly through not realizing the intensity of this feeling. I should be very sorry if we imitated so disastrous an example. Questions affecting the future government of America concern Americans alone. Any attempted interference by us would be at once indefensible and suicidal.

Nevertheless, I need not argue—for it is the essence of the case for allowing so mischievous a traffic to go on—that if any legitimate action of ours is likely to have the indirect effect of strengthening those forces in America which are favorable to our national cause and weakening the opposing forces, it is to our interest to take such action. And it is equally unnecessary to argue that what a patriotic Englishman will most ardently desire is the defeat of Mr. Bryan, whose pacifist propaganda with its corollary, the prohibition of the supply of munitions to the Allies, might, if accepted by the nation, easily cause us serious embarrassment.

Now the fate of Mr. Bryan and his agitation will virtually be decided at the Convention of the Democratic Party, which must meet next year to nominate a candidate for the Presidential election and to frame a programme for him. The issue will be decided by the balance of forces within the Democratic Party.

Of these forces a very important one

is the attitude and influence of the South. The South is solidly Democrat, and supplies a very large proportion of the voting strength of the party. It is true that, generally speaking, it is a silent and quiescent element. It is the Northern Democrats who normally frame the programmes and select the candidates. But there are two points concerning which the South is sensitive. When either is touched it will put forth those powerful political energies which have been latent since the Civil War. One is the Negro, the other is Cotton.

In the ordinary way we might safely rely on the Southern element as one which would count in our favor. The South would naturally support Mr. Wilson, who is a Southerner, against Mr. Bryan, "the boy orator of Nebraska," under whose leadership, even when it was acknowledged and unquestioned, "Dixie" was always rather restive. Also the South in bulk sympathizes with the Allies.

But what is likely to be the effect of the policy of our Government on the situation? The answer is easy. *By encouraging the South to sell its cotton at a high price to Germany, our rulers are creating there a powerful vested interest concerned above all things to prevent a rupture with Germany*, since such a rupture must necessarily mean the interruption of their bargains and might easily leave the South with a large part of its cotton crop unsold and unsaleable on its hands.

Such an interest must necessarily find itself, however unwillingly, on the side of Mr. Bryan. Its intervention is perhaps the one thing that could make his capture of the Democratic Party certain by giving him the backing of the "solid South." The South will not be influenced as parts of the West may by Mr. Bryan's personality and prestige. And there is no part of the

Union which is less likely to be influenced by mere pacifist idealism, such as finds not a little favor with the "highbrows" of the Northern and Middle States. But the whole history of America from 1820 onwards proves how profoundly the attitude and policy of the South are influenced by the requirements of cotton. Already an ominous statement has appeared to the effect that only two members of Mr. Wilson's Cabinet are disposed to dissent from his policy, and that these are Southerners concerned for the safety of the cotton trade. True or false, the announcement and its apparent acceptance as probable suggests a dangerous shifting of Southern opinion on this question, and for that shifting our own policy must be held largely if not entirely responsible.

I have said that it would be madness for this country to do anything that could even be plausibly represented as an interference in the internal politics of America. But it so happens that a policy is clearly open to us to which not the most passionate devotee of independence could take exception and which is yet calculated to modify very considerably and in our favor the balance of forces in American politics and especially within the Democratic Party, where the immediate contest must be fought.

If as a result of our stopping the supply of American cotton to Germany such cotton were left on the hands of its producers, a dangerous feeling against this country might, I admit, appear in the Southern States, though the practical effect of such a measure in America could hardly be worse than that of our present policy; while in Europe we should comparatively soon compel our enemies to economize in high explosives. But, in fact, no such alternative presents itself. There is a third course open to us whose effect

would be equally excellent on both sides of the Atlantic.

Manchester has already, and indeed repeatedly, offered to purchase the whole American cotton crop and to supply Allies and neutrals with such quantities as they may require for their own use, while so restricting the exportation as to make it impossible that any supplies should reach the enemy. Why this public-spirited offer has not been accepted by the Government, and why the patriotism which prompted it has been rewarded by a succession of snubs and evasions, I cannot imagine. However, I understand that it is still open, and the time to close with it is now, for arrangements for the disposal of the year's crop will soon have to be completed.

What would be the results of such a step? Its results in Europe need no amplification. If we had taken it at the beginning, the war would certainly be over by now, and we should, merely from the financial standpoint, have saved an expenditure which would purchase all the cotton in the world a hundred times over. If we took it now the war would probably end long before most of us now expect it to end. It is true that our own folly has permitted the enemy to accumulate considerable reserves of this material so essential to the production of his munitions. But it is also true that his expenditure of these munitions is enormous—how much cotton must he have shot away in pushing back our Russian Allies during the month of June?—and that the material at his disposal is irreplaceable. In a very short time he would have to begin to economize in shells, and from that moment victory would be virtually certain.

As to its effect in America, that is almost equally clear. Germany would cease to be a customer of the American cotton-grower. England, always

his principal customer, would become his only customer. It would be the relations of his country with England that he would be compelled to watch closely; it would be a breach with England which he would have to fear. If the prices he obtained were somewhat lower than those which Germany in her desperation might be willing to pay, he would have on the other hand an absolute guarantee against

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loss, and a secure market for every ounce of cotton he chose to raise. Under such conditions it is safe to say that the "solid South" now torn to some extent between its natural sympathies and its economic necessities, would, with the full satisfaction of both, prove a powerful bulwark against which the enemies of England in America would break their hands in vain.

Ocell Cheaterston.

THE AMERICAN STAND.

The new Note of the United States Government advances the German-American controversy to a definite and critical point. It is a point that, given the circumstances, must sooner or later have been reached. So long as the German Admiralty claims, and has no intention of abandoning, the right to torpedo at sight any merchant ship or passenger vessel found in British waters, so long must the lives and property of neutral American citizens be in peril of destruction. That is the essence of the situation, and it cannot be evaded. The Germans have attempted to dodge it by a series of proposals that would enable the Americans to purchase immunity from submarine attack by placing their freedom of movement and of trade under German orders. They have attempted to excuse it by pleading that piracy has been forced upon them by British violations of the rules of war. President Wilson rejects their proposals and refuses to countenance their excuses. He insists that when American lives are lost by the "illegal and inhuman acts" of German naval commanders an issue is precipitated that concerns Germany and the United States alone. It is an issue not merely of law, or of neutral rights, but of those fundamental principles of hu-

manity on which all law and all rights are presumed to rest. We have our own differences of opinion with the United States. Some of them touch important questions of principle and procedure. But not one of them raises, or ever will raise, any question of what Mr. Wilson calls "the right to life itself." Not one of them bears the remotest resemblance to the "frightfulness" that orders and plans the wholesale murder of non-combatant neutrals under the plea of military expediency. That is the "unpardonable offence" against civilization which Americans will never forgive, and which has brought them at this moment to the very verge of a rupture with its authors. President Wilson renews his demand for a disavowal of "the wanton act" of the German submarine officer in sinking the *Lusitania*, and for reparation for the American lives thus needlessly destroyed. If he does not also renew his demand for assurances that no similar atrocities will be committed, it is probably because he realizes its hopelessness. But while expressing once more his readiness to mediate between the belligerents with a view to changing the present character of the war at sea, he sharply warns Germany that any repetition of her crime will be regarded by the United

States as "deliberately unfriendly." That is not an ultimatum. But it is an exceedingly strong and definite warning.

Thus far then has the United States come in the fourteen and a half weeks since the *Lusitania* was sunk. It cannot be said that President Wilson has been precipitate. His handling of the whole question has, indeed, been not less remarkable for its patience than for its sustained loftiness. Regarding himself from the first as the champion of no narrow or selfish or exclusively national interest, but of a cause as wide as humanity itself, he has studiously offered Germany every chance to re-establish herself in the judgment of civilization. Even now it is happily premature to say that he has wholly failed. But quite evidently he has not succeeded. His appeals to the better mind and the saner spirit of a once great people have not borne fruit. His efforts to penetrate the conscience of the German Government have gone unrewarded. Yet he cannot regret, and least of all in this dark hour, a single one of his missionary endeavors. If he has now behind him a virtually united people it is because his fellow-

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countrymen recognize that he has done and said nothing to bring on and everything to avert a crisis, and that no word or act of his can be pointed to as tainted with provocation or lacking in the essentials of a humane, charitable, and pacific spirit. The responsibilities of an American President in such an emergency as this are very great. We do not know when they have been discharged with more skill, or dignity, or self-restraint than by Mr. Wilson. His diplomacy has precisely interpreted the national wish to avoid a conflict and the national resolution not to shirk it if Germany forces it on. That is why the President has carried with him during the past few anxious months the great mass of American opinion. It is with him now when the gravity of the situation can no longer be concealed. We are confident it will stay with him in whatever further decisions or action, however serious, that German barbarities on the high seas may compel him to take. He has placed the responsibility for all future developments squarely upon the shoulders of Germany. Americans will await the upshot with a clear conscience and a united front.

THE ORDEAL OF RUSSIA.

We wonder if it has occurred to many to look lately into the pages of Bunyan. It is a book for times such as these. All the characters of his immortal parable have spoken to us through the Press and in political acts and orations. There have been many phases of opinion that represent his three sluggards, Simple and Sloth and Presumption. "Simple said, *I see no danger*; Sloth said, *Yet a little more sleep*; and Presumption said, *Every cat must stand upon its own bottom*.

And so they lay down to sleep again," and the war went on its way.

Mr. Penitent and Mr. Contrite have appeared here and there, and many a Mr. Vallant-for-Truth has been summoned to the life beyond the moments of this world, and has carried with him marks and scars of his necessary battles. Then there is the great idealism that regards Germany as the new Apollyon, and the Allies and their cause as invincible Christians. France has welcomed a renaissance of religious

faith; Russia has been exalted by her creed; and in our own country, as among our troops at the Front, there is more selfless prayer than the materialism of peace has ever inspired. War to spiritual nations is a dread pilgrimage to the holy mysteries of creeds and faiths.

Apollyon, meanwhile, is true to himself. He "speaks like a dragon," "throws darts as thick as hail," and inflicts so many wounds that Christian at times seems "almost quite spent." "Then says Apollyon, *I am sure of thee now*" [as after Mons]; "but, as God would have it, while Apollyon is fetching of his last blow, thereby to make a full end of this good man, Christian nimbly reaches out his hand for his sword, and catches it, saying, *Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy! When I fall I shall arise*; and with that gives him a deadly thrust, which makes him give back, as one that has received his mortal wound. Christian, perceiving this, makes at him again, saying, *Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loves us*. And with that Apollyon spreads forth his dragon's wings and speeds him away, that Christian for a season sees him no more."

That this has been, and is, the faith of Russia there can be no doubt. A wondrous Christian chivalry has inspired her troops in the midst of hardships and privations perhaps unexampled in the history of war. Her winter campaign was worse even than that which the Franco-British armies encountered in their rain-filled trenches, partly because she had often to dig her way through deep snows, and partly because the deficient railway system over her enormous territories added day by day to the difficulties that hindered the distribution of supplies and men, and the succor of wounded ten thousands. Then, with the coming of spring, another trial, un-

imaginable to us, began to take from her, mile by mile, all that she had gained after a campaign of marvellous fortitude, lit up by the patient genius of a great strategist. It is always in retreat that an army shows the difference between courage and heroism. Courage "is a good soldier that will on"; it is the rising tide in war. Heroism, on the other hand, is indefatigable in defence against long odds and in cool retreats after disastrous blows. To hold a trench month by month is much more difficult than to make a series of brave and successful attacks aided by the momentum that victory gives to an army. More difficult still by far is an ordered retreat from a superior force inspired by the confidence of a big success. Such retreats are exceedingly uncommon in history. As a rule armies in retreat lose discipline and degenerate into rabble. Privation and pain—more searching than any other tests of fortitude and endurance—become so unbearable that retreating soldiers usually clamor for a battle, no matter what the consequences may be. Grave retreats are to armies, in fact, what *angina pectoris* has ever been to individual men—supreme as a climax in physical and moral suffering.

Throughout the war Germany has counted much on the psychology of retreat. It has not occurred to her that rules are altered by circumstances, and that she is opposed by unusual armies everywhere—by armies whose faith in their cause lifts them on ample pinions into a militant loyalty to Justice and Freedom and Self-Denial. A French writer humbly and devoutly describes the retreat from Charleroi and Mons as "comprehensible only because it was necessary to the miracle of the Marne"; and who can overpraise the spiritual unity which during the past eight weeks has enabled the Czar's armies to move back from defeat with a cool and

masterful resignation greatly feared by the Austrians and very perplexing to the Germans, who have been obliged to invest more men and more munitions than their general strategy can afford? In fact, the German corps, probably sixteen in number, have been split up in order to brace the slackened sinews of the Austrian forces; and not even the capture of Warsaw will either take from Russia her inspired fervor or enable the Austrians to rise above their historic character.

It follows, then, in a just inference, that while stricken Russia is recovering from her material losses in order to "make good" in a new campaign, Germany will be greatly handicapped by her Ally, as well as by her vast efforts and casualties. Should Germany withdraw many corps from her Eastern front, leaving the Austrians to hold Russia at bay in many important places, how can she expect to profit by her successes? Her troops have no respect for the Austrians, and the reconquest of Galicia, an Austrian province, has not amused them in any way. As for Warsaw, the third city of Russia, with three great strategic bridges over the Vistula, its loss is a serious blow, but certainly neither its anticipation nor its realization will justify a panic. Russia has already faced the near possibility quietly and without dismay.

Now efforts are being made in England to alarm the most tiresome section into which our public is divided. The "optimists" of yesterday, who passed away from the war into strikes or into gushing delusions, are trying now to do full justice to a violent cold fit, a sort of political rigor. Some of them say, unashamed, that Russia, after terrible experiences, will drift into Tolstol's pacifism; but most of them get a thrill of fear from other hypothetical events. They do not suppose that Russia is at all likely to risk a

decisive battle; but they do suppose that German troops will be sent back to the Western Front, a seasoned army at least a million strong, and that terrible things may happen. It has been written: "A decisive battle between armies, one of which is provided with limitless and the other with limited shells, can have only one result—defeat for the army whose supply is limited."

The answer to this electric talk is simple. Let Germany play her own game. Her lines on the Eastern Front have been greatly extended, her communications greatly lengthened; Austria remains her incalculable ally; and along the Western Front, in the opinion of unblinded judges, the defence of the Allies has no weakness at any point. It is as impregnable as science and brave men can make it. If Germany eases the strain on Russia, then Russia's Allies ought to be thankful; but in no circumstances will Russia swerve from her allegiance to a sacred cause.

To-day, for the first time in her history, she fights as a nation united in all her classes by an ideal that transcends and beautifies the common ambitions of daily life. Hitherto, in all her wars, there has been no political idea that claimed from all her subjects their religious fervor and their fireside patriotism. Even under Catherine the Great, when, as Voltaire urged, there was an excellent opportunity to recover Constantinople from the cruel fanaticism of the Moslem, Russia's people, only half awake, balked the enterprise of their ruler. To-day the religious Slavonic genius, dreamful, hesitant, but, as Napoleon said, gifted with an unparalleled heroism in defence, has discovered in a war of ennobling self-sacrifice an intensification of her spiritual life, a trial essential in a national effort towards completer self-realization. And this means that Russia has now linked

her fortunes to the historic truth that the most religious among the great races of the world and the most religious among the divisions of those races—the Hebrews, the Romans, the Anglo-Saxo-Celts, the Saracens, the Osmanli, for example—have been the most militant and have pursued in war the loftiest political ends. There is nothing lofty in the aims of Germany. Apollyon is true to himself; and so is Christian.

We do not minimize the blows which Russia has received in the Shadow of Death. But we would not exaggerate them. To trust Russia and to mistrust the British egotism that defies Acts of Parliament is the best aid that stay-at-homes can give to the field armies. And we should like to draw attention to the fact that every weakness which our country has shown in her attitude to a thorough self-denial has drawn confidence from the protection given to us all by the Navy. No treasonable pamphlets would have been distributed by pro-Germans, and no strike of

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miners would have taken place if the people had had reason to be anxious about their personal safety. It was confidence in the Navy that deprived us of a sufficient Expeditionary Force; and the same confidence has aided Germany in many a later compromise and folly. Few evils are more dangerous than is an unthinking submission to a blessing and a boon. France, Italy, Russia, open to invasion, know that Apollyon is not a foe to be overcome by half-measures. Our country alone, while talking in superlatives about her aims, has endeavored, month after month, to keep in war the prejudices and the privileges of peace. What would the Navy say if it passed judgment in a referendum on this vital matter?

Our Allies have learnt that in times of national crisis minutes should be treated as precious hours, and hours as precious days, and days as inestimable months. Here is the wisdom of tragedy—a wisdom which some of us have yet to learn.

INDIA AND THE FUTURE OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

As events, however slowly, draw near to a decision in the Dardanelles and the Near East generally, it will be necessary for us to be prepared for the handling of some very difficult questions affecting the relations of England with the Moslem world. The future of Constantinople is, of course, the first of these. There is among the Allies practically no doubt at all as to the central issue. They assume that the Turk as a ruling force in Europe has reached his term. Turkey, as Mr. Asquith said, has committed suicide; or, at any rate, it will emerge from the conflict as a purely Asiatic power. If, or when, that day arrives, the people of Islam will be interested

in two questions which to them are of high importance—the possession and control of Constantinople and the preservation of the Caliphate. Upon both questions Sir Edward Grey has, during the past six months, made brief statements in the House of Commons. As to the first he intimated that the Allies were agreed as to the satisfaction of Russia's legitimate claims; the second, he implied, was a matter for settlement among the Moslem peoples themselves. But this obviously does not mean that the Caliphate can be isolated from the international conclusions forced by the war.

Unlike the Papacy, the Caliphate has been during twelve centuries at the

mercy of the conqueror. For five hundred years, until the middle of the thirteenth century, it was established at Bagdad. During that period, as Mr. Ameer Ali wrote the other day, the conception of the Caliph-Imam as the divinely appointed vice-gerent of the Prophet became part of the religious life of the Islamic peoples. He was at once secular ruler and head of the Church. The Bagdad tradition, however, was broken. When the city fell before the Mongols, and the primacy of Islam was removed to Cairo (A.D. 1261), the Caliphate was separated from the Sultanate. The Mameluke Sultans of Egypt received their authority at the hands of the Caliph-Imam; and this went on for two and a half centuries, until, after the conquest of the Mamelukes by the Turks, the nominal Caliph (in 1517) transferred his dignity to the Ottoman conqueror, thus restoring to the Caliphate its dual character of secular sovereignty and ecclesiastical headship. Henceforward Constantinople became Islam-bol (Stamboul), the City of Islam, and as such, for just four hundred years, the Moslem world has held it in reverence. The Caliphate, however, is not bound up with the Ottoman Empire or with the House of Othman. Clearly, there has been very little of the Pope about the Sultan of Turkey, whose position as head of Islam is associated mainly with the guardianship of the Holy Places. We may take for granted that the death of Turkey in Europe would result in a redistribution of power in Western Asia, and, as the out-and-out adherents of Nationality (Mr. Arnold Toynbee, for example) are arguing, an independent and re-nascent Arabia is within the bounds of possibility. In that event the restoration of the Arabian Caliphate is conceivable, with, in view of the completed Hedjaz Railway, a custody of Mecca and Medina much more thorough

than the Ottoman Sultan has been able to exercise. Whatever is to happen as the result of the fighting in the Near East, Britain must be deeply interested in the settlement. She is the largest Mahomedan Power in the world. Close upon 100 millions out of the total Mahomedan population of 350 to 400 millions are in the British Empire. Mr. Ameer Ali, from whose article in the *Contemporary* we have quoted, urges upon the British Foreign Office the supreme importance of preserving intact the prestige and influence of the Caliphate, and of preventing its being "thrown into the melting-pot of intestinal discord and schismatic strife." That, probably, is something altogether beyond us, even if we took seriously the solution hinted at now and again by friendly Moslem princes, that the destiny of the Caliphate is its transference to the King-Emperor of India.

All this, however, with much more heard recently from Anglo-Indian and other academic authorities, is mere speculation. The main practical fact for us is that when the time approaches for the ending of the old régime in Constantinople the maintenance of the loyalty of Mahomedan India will make a heavy demand upon British and Anglo-Indian statesmanship. What, at the moment, is the outlook? It is impossible to deny that both before and during the war the authorities in India have been guilty of foolish panic and blundering action. They are suffering still from the Curzonian tradition: that is, from a policy based upon the disastrous assumption that it is a simple matter to play off Moslem against Hindu and to keep the Indian Mahomedans quiet by means of a few special privileges. The idea is absurd, fatal; and we could wish that Lord Hardinge's Government had shown a more complete realization of the peril. It was pointed out in

these columns some months ago that the suppression of all the independent Mahomedan newspapers in India was accomplished at a time when the Administration needed all the help it could get from the Press in explaining and commending the war policy of the Allies to the Moslem population. The bureaucracy, however, thought otherwise, and it has lately ordered the confinement of Mr. Mahomed Ali, the most influential Moslem publicist in the country, and his brother, within a specified area of the Delhi district. Further, the educated Mahomedan community has been for years disturbed by the hostility of the Government of India to the long-cherished scheme of an Islamic University, and, in common with the National Congress party, it has recently been protesting against the destruction by the House of Lords of a Bill to provide the United Provinces of the North-West with an executive council. Nor can we omit to take note of the less favorable facts connected with the Indian Army on the Western battle front. The dissatisfaction arising from the refusal of promotion from the ranks exists among the Moslem soldiers no less than among the Sikhs, and, as the Government is aware, many conservative Anglo-Indians have been impelled to utter warnings upon the subject.

The New Statesman.

There is reason, moreover, to believe that the military authorities have been anything but wise in their way of using the Indian troops. Islam, said an able writer not long ago, differs from Christianity in nothing so much as in its eccentric objection to fratricidal strife; and the grave outbreak at Singapore furnished evidence of deplorable failure to understand this deep-rooted feeling. The times are critical. It would be idle to pretend that the loyalty of Mahomedan India is an unvarying and unshakable sentiment upon which we can count without reference to the conduct of our officials in India or the events and decisions of the theatre of war. We cannot. Should Constantinople be handed over to Russia, the 70 millions of Moslems in India will be profoundly shaken. If, as an alternative, the Powers declare for an internationalized city and district, the disturbance of feeling will probably be less violent; but it cannot fail to be serious, since in that event as in the other Constantinople will cease to be the City of Islam. The moral for us should be clear enough. England must realize her responsibilities as the greatest Moslem Power, and recognize that the first step towards that realization is to insist upon the most enlightened and courageous policy in India.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS.

The tragedy which results when an educated man of cultivated tastes and even latent family pride marries a pretty, spoiled girl, unlettered and unused to the ways of the world, is the theme of "Victoria," by Martha Grace Cole. Victoria lived in a small Kansas town and after she married Sefton Trent who came there in connection

with the discovery of copper, she found herself not the favorite, indulged child she had always been, admired for her beauty and quickness, but the source of exasperation and annoyance to her husband because of her crudity. Instead of stoutly defending his wife, Trent became more and more sensitive to the criticisms

which outsiders made, and lost the sense of Victoria's real value. Education was the means by which Victoria then tried to forget her lost illusions and made a place for herself in the world, and through education she won back what she thought she neither regretted nor desired. The book is highly serious and is an arraignment against false pride and artificiality. Sherman French & Co.

The "Studies of the Great War" by Dr. Newell Dwight Hillis (Fleming H. Revell Co.) consists of ten discourses given by the author on successive Sunday evenings from October to December to large congregations in Brooklyn, each essaying to set forth the history, motives and aspirations of one of the nations engaged in the struggle. Brought together in this volume, they may well reach a much larger audience, for they are compact, accurate and well-considered, and the more forceful in their appeal by reason of the circumstances of their original delivery.

A younger sister to Mrs. Malaprop and Mrs. Partington may be found in Mr. Joseph C. Lincoln's "Thankful's Inheritance," and her original dislocations of the English language should become household words. Around this excellent lady are grouped not only the inevitable captains of Mr. Lincoln's world, but lovers a-many, and maidens fair to see. A pig is the mainspring of the story, a pig named Patrick Henry to make him a suitable companion for George Washington, the horse, and John Hancock and George Three, the roosters. John Hancock and George Three exchanged names after their very first fight, in which George "pretty near licked the stuffin' out of John." Thankful turns her inheritance, an old house, into a small hotel, and according to her, Mrs. Partington

makes each meal a "regular Beezebub's feast, leaving out the hand-writing on the wall, of course." Equally, of course, the consequences include a mortgage, and the good and bad lawyers, and speculators appear as eagles gather about their quarry, but in the end everybody is happy, even Patrick Henry and the best of all the good men in the tale. Mr. Lincoln's art improves with each successive book and "Thankful's Inheritance" is as well-proportioned, and as insistently compels attention, as if it were written by a Frenchman intent upon shocking the English "meess" and pleasing her bad old brother. D. Appleton & Company.

The average novel of 1915 presupposes vast and comfortable leisure in the reader, or possibly a fierce determination to have the worth of his money, for, if it be not quite as long as *Clarissa Harlowe* it is no shorter than "Evelina," and "The Honey Bee" by Samuel Merwin is quite up to the regulation size. Nearly all its characters are more or less connected with the complex life of a large department shop with its curious rivalries and jealousies, its occasional fine examples of chivalry, family devotion and courtesy. Zola has brutally expounded its ugly possibilities. Mr. Merwin prefers to display its better side, without attempting to deny that suspicion waits upon the steps of the brave, self-supporting girl, even in her charities, and that only by the strictest caution can she escape calumny. The "Honey Bee," Hilda Wilson, American foreign buyer, is first seen in Paris, a few minutes after she has nipped the budding affections of a French grandfather amiably willing to play Romeo to her Juliet, she being thirty-two years of age, good looking, and mistress of a salary of \$8,000 a year exclusive of expenses. The adventure is

the last of a series of wearisome annoyances and in her search for diversion she becomes acquainted with some of the mysteries of the ring and the gloves, and of the vaudeville stage, and also becomes an adept in nursery lore. More than one bit of genuine pathos occurs in the story and its interest is unbroken. The Bobbs-Merrill Company.

Mr. Barrett H. Clark has now added "The British and American Drama of To-Day" to the list of excellent handbooks issued by Henry Holt & Co. for students of the art of dramatic criticism and the science of play-writing. The volume is a companion to "The Continental Drama of To-Day," now in its second printing but as certain British and American authors do not print at all, and certain others publish very expensive editions, Mr. Clark does not find it necessary to furnish suggestions for the study of their plays. On the other hand, he devotes over forty pages to the interesting Irish Drama, giving suggestions as to single plays of Mr. Yeats, Mr. Murray, and Mr. St. John G. Ervine, Mr. Synge's *Riders to the Sea* and *The Playboy of the Western World*; and Lady Gregory's *Hyacinth Haloe* and *The Rising of the Moon*. It must be understood that Mr. Clark's methods are entirely unlike those used by Mr. Israel Zangwill in his elaborate edition of the plays of Shakespeare. He stimulates the student by skilful hints: Mr. Zangwill performs the work and allows his readers to take their own way. The account of Miss Elizabeth Baker and her work will be prized by those who have seen her "chains," for it is a real romance of literature. A Bibliography and an index double the usefulness of the work.

Many illustrious families derive their names from the physical charac-

teristics of an ancestor, says the Dictionary of the French Academy, and inasmuch as Adam means black earth it seems possible that its learned authors are in the right. Perhaps the future Arizona will point to the Deslymmes as a case in point, for, according to Mr. Henry Herbert Knibbs's tale of "Sundown Slim" its hero of six feet four was not much broader than an exclamation point, and his dog Chance was constructed with similar economy of material. When the story begins, wandering man and stray dog are equals in wealth, and Sundown, although he prefers to be regarded as a poet is what he calls a "Bo" who came into an Arizona camp "on a freight" and unmentioned in the way-bill, and cooked his way to prosperity. Pies "was his strong suit," each pie bearing upon its flaky crust the brand of its future eater; for one man one pie is the law on Arizona ranches as long as the flour lasts. But Arizona abounds in problems: sheep, and "cows," and irrigation, and fencing and sheriffs with meticulous regard for the law. Sundown wrestles with all in turn, sees many sides of life, and philosophizes on all to the delectation of any reader properly appreciative of humor. For those who prefer picturesque description Mr. Knibbs offers many admirable passages, and two small love stories besides Sundown's are included in the chronicle. An occasional half-vellid pun may be forgiven in a romance so pleasant. Houghton Mifflin Company.

The appearance of a new poet is an event of no little importance in the literary world. Verse makers there are in plenty, some of them graceful enough and with a good command of the technique of verse; but a real poet, gifted with insight and imagination and capable of voicing the

thoughts and feelings and experiences of real people,—that is another matter. Such a poet we have in the person of Robert Frost, whose "North of Boston" and "A Boy's Will" (Henry Holt & Co.) are as noteworthy in their way as the first volumes of Alfred Noyes were in theirs; and a surprising thing about them is that, although the poet is an American and his poems are largely of New England, he made his first appeal to the English public and carried by storm the often-reserved English critics. "A Boy's Will" is the earlier of the two volumes. It contains thirty or more brief poems, most of them in rhymed verse, and with a certain sequence of thought which might perhaps hardly suggest itself except for the arrangement and a few interpretative words in prose. They are graceful and unaffected, yet but little above the level of scores of contemporary books of verse. Here is one of the best of them, "Pan With Us":

Pan came out of the woods one day,—
His skin and his hair and his eyes
were gray,

The gray of the moss of walls were
they,—

And stood in the sun and looked his
fill

At wooded valley and wooded hill.

He stood in the zephyr, pipes in hand,
On a height of naked pasture land;
In all the country he did command
He saw no smoke and he saw no
roof.

That was well! and he stamped a
hoof.

His heart knew peace, for none came
here

To this lean feeding save once a year
Some one to salt the half-wild steer,
Or homespun children with clicking
palls

Who see so little they tell no tales.

He tossed his pipes, too hard to teach

A new-world song, far out of reach,
For a sylvan sign that the blue jay's
screech

And the whimper of hawks beside
the sun

Were music enough for him, for one.

Times were changed from what they
were:

Such pipes kept less of power to stir
The fruited bough of the juniper

And the fragile bluets clustered
there

Than the merest aimless breath of
air.

They were pipes of pagan mirth,
And the world had found new terms
of worth.

He laid him down on the sunburned
earth

And ravelled a flower and looked
away—

Play? Play?—What should he play?

It is in the fifteen narrative poems in blank verse which make up the volume "North of Boston" that the poet reaches his highest level. These are all poems of New England, touched with the simplicity, the loneliness, the tragedy of life far from the cities. Some of the critics have compared the author to Whitman, but the comparison does him less than justice, for his verse is cleaner than Whitman's, more natural, and free from those affectations which made many of Whitman's lines mere torrents of words. Such poems as "The Death of the Hired Man," "Home Burial," "The Fear," "The Self-Seeker" and "The Black Cottage" have a pathos and poignancy which touch the heart and linger in the memory. They are as true to New England life as the best stories of Sarah Orne Jewett or Anna Fuller; and they are as remarkable for their sympathetic insight as for their power and tenderness. No one who did not know New England intimately could have written them.